

P H Æ D R A⁴
A N D
HIPPOLITUS.
A
T R A G E D Y.

Written by

Mr. EDMUND SMITH.



D U B L I N :

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Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

THESEUS, *king of Crete.*

HIPPOLITUS, *his son, in love with Ismena.*

LYCON, *minister of state.*

CRATANDER, *captain of the guards.*

W O M E N.

PHÆDRA, *Theseus's queen, in love with Hippolitus.*

ISMENA, *a captive princess, in love with Hippolitus.*

Guards, Attendants.



Phædra and Hippolitus.

A

TRAGEDY.

ACT I.

Enter Cratander and Lycon.

LYCON.

TIS strange *Cratander*, that the royal *Phædra*
Shou'd still continue resolute in grief,
And obstinately wretched :
That one so gay, so beautiful, and young,
Of godlike virtue, and imperial power,
Shou'd fly inviting joys, and court destruction.

Crat. Is there not cause, when lately join'd in marriage,
To have the king her husband call'd to war ?
Then for three tedious moons to mourn his absence,
Nor knows his fate ?

Lyc. The king may cause her sorrow,
But not by absence : oft I've seen him hang
With greedy eyes, and languish o'er her beauties :
She from his wide, deceive'd, desiring arms,
Flew :asle less, loath'g ; whilst dejected *Theseus*,
With mournful loving eyes pursue'd her flight,
And dropt a silent tear.

Crat. Ha! this is hatred,
This is aversion, horror, detestation :
Why did the queen, who might have call'd mankind,
Why did she give her person, and her throne,
To one she loath'd?

Lyc. Perhaps she thought it just
That he should wear the crown his valour save'd.

Crat. Cou'd she not glut his hopes with wealth and
honour,
Reward his valour, yet reje&t his love ?
Why, when a happy mother, queen, and widow,
Why did she wed old *Theseus*? while his son,
The brave *Hippolitus*, with equal youth,
And equal beauty, might have fill'd her arms.

Lyc. *Hippolitus*, (in distant *Scythia* born,
The warlike *Amazon Camilla*'s son,)
'Till our queen's marriage was unknown to *Crete* :
And sure the queen cou'd wish him still unknown :
She loaths, detests him, flies his hated presence,
And shuns and trembles at his very name.

Crat. Well may she hate the prince she needs must
fear ;
He may dispute the crown with *Phædra*'s son.
He's brave, he's fiery, youthful and belov'd ;
His courage charms the men, his form the women ;
His very sports are war.

Lyc. O! he's all hero, scorns th' inglorious ease
Of lazy *Crete*, delights to shine in arms,
To wield the sword, and launch the pointed spear ;
To tame the gen'rous horse, that, nobly wild,
Neighs on the hills, and dares the angry lion ;
To join the struggling coursers to his chariot,
To make their stubborn necks he rein obey,
To turn, to stop, or stretch along the plain.
Now the queen's sick, there's danger in his courage.—
Be ready with your guards. — I fear *Hippolitus*.

[Exit *Cratander*.]

Fear him ! for what ? poor silly virtuous wretch,
Affecting glory, and contemning pow'r :
Warm without pride, without ambition brave :
A senseless hero, fit to be a tool
To those whose godlike souls are turn'd for empire.

An

An open honest fool, that loves and hates,
 And yet more fool to own it. He hates flatterers,
 He hates me too ; weak boy, to make a foe
 Where he might have a slave. I hate him too,
 But cringe, and flatter, fawn, adore, yet hate him.
 Let the queen live or die, the prince must fall.

Enter Isimena.

What ! still attending on the queen, *Isimena* ?
 O charming virgin ! O exalted virtue !
 Can still your goodness conquer all your wrongs ?
 Are you not robb'd of your Athenian crown ?
 Was not your royal father *Pallas* slain,
 And all his wretched race, by conqu'ring *Theseus* ?
 And do you still watch o'er his consort *Phædra*,
 And still repay such cruelty with love ?

Ism. Let them be cruel that delight in mischief,
 I'm of a softer mould ; poor *Phædra*'s sorrows
 Pierce through my yielding heart, and wound my soul.

Lyc. Now thrice the rising sun has clear'd the
 world,
 Since she renew'd her strength with due refreshment ?
 Thrice has the night brought ease to man, to beast,
 Since wretched *Phædra* cloie'd her streaming eyes :
 She flies all rest, all necessary food,
 Resolve'd to die, nor capable to live.

Ism. But now her grief has wrought her into
 frenzy ;

The images her troubled fancy forms
 Are incoherent, wild ; her words disjointed :
 Sometimes she raves for musick, light, and air ;
 Nor air, nor light, nor musick calm her pains.
 Then with extatick strength she springs aloft,
 And moves and bounds with vigour not her own.

Lyc. Then life is on the wing, then mott she sinks
 When mott she seems revive'd. Like boiling water,
 That foams and hisses o'er the crackling wood,
 And bubbles to the brim ; ev'n then mott waiting,
 When mott it swells.

Ism. My lord, now try your art ;
 Her wild disorder may disclose the secret
 Her cooler senie conceal'd ; the Pythian goddess

PHÆDRA and

Is dumb and sullen, 'till, with fury fill'd,
 She spreads, she rises, growing to the fight,
 She stares, she foams, she raves; the awful secrets
 Burst from her trembling lips, and ease the torture'd
 maid.

But *Phædra* comes; ye gods, how pale, how weak!

Enter Phædra and Attendants.

Phæd. Stay, virgins, stay, I'll rest my weary steps;
 My strength forsakes me, and my dazzle'd eyes
 Ake with the flashing light, my loosen'd knees
 Sink under their dull weight: support me, *Lycon*.
 Alas! I faint.

Lyc. Afford her ease, kind heav'n!

Phæd. Why blaze these jewels round my wretched
 head?

Why all this labour'd elegance of dress,
 Why flow these wanton curls in artful rings?
 Take, snatch 'em hence: Alas! you all conspire
 To heap new sorrows on my torture'd soul:
 All, all conspire to make your queen unhappy.

Sm. This you require'd, and, to the pleasing task,
 Call'd your officious maids, and urge'd their art;
 You bid 'em lead you from yon hideous darkness
 To the glad clearing day; yet now avoid it,
 And hate the light you sought.

Phæd. Oh! my *Lycon*!
 Oh! how I long to lay my weary head
 On tender flow'ry beds and springing grass,
 To stretch my limbs beneath the spreading shades
 Of venerable oaks, to slake my thirst
 With the cool nectar of refreshing springs.

Lyc. I'll sooth her frenzy; come, *Phædra*, let's
 away,

Let's to the woods, and lawns, and limpid streams.

Phæd. Come, let's away, and thou most bright *Diana*,
 Goddess of woods, immortal, chaste *Diana*,
 Goddess presiding o'er the rapid race,
 Place me, O place me in the dusty ring,
 Where youthful charioteers contend for glory;
 See how they mount and shake the flowing reins,
 See from the goal the fiery coursers bound,

HIPPOLITUS.

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Now they strain panting up the steepy hil',
Now sweep along its top, now neigh along the vale ;
How the car rattles, how its kindling wheels
Smoak in the whirl ! the circling sand ascends,
And in the noble dust the chariot's lost.

Lyc. What, Madam !

Phæd. Ah ! my *Lycon* ! ah ! what said I ?
Where was I hurry'd by my roving fancy ?
My languid eyes are wet with sudden tears,
And on my face unbidden blushes glow.

Lyc. Blush then, but blush for your destructive silence,
That tears your soul, and weighs you down to death ;
Oh ! shou'd you die (ye pow'rs forbid her death)
Who then wou'd shield from wrongs your helpless
orphan ?

O ! he might wander, *Phædra*'s son might wander,
A naked suppliant thro' the world for aid ;
Then he may cry, invoke his mother's name :
He may be doom'd to chains, to shame, to death,
While proud *Hippolitus* shall mount his throne.

Phæd. O heav'ns !

Lyc. Ha, *Phædra*, are you touch'd at this ?

Phæd. Unhappy wretch ; what name was that you
spoke ?

Lyc. And does his name provoke your just resent-
ments ?

Then let it raise your fear, as well as rage :
Think how you wrong'd him, to his father wrong'd
him :

Think how you drove him hence a wand'ring exile
To distant climes, then think what certain vengeance
His rage may wreak on your unhappy orphan :
For his sake then renew your drooping spirits,
Feed with new oil the wasting lamp of life,
That winks and trembles, now, just now expiring :
Make haste, preserve your life :

Phæd. Alas ! too long,
Too long have I perserve'd that guilty life.

Lyc. Guilty ! what guilt ? has blood has horrid
murder

Imbrue'd your hands ?

Phæd. Alas, my hands are guiltless :

But,

But, oh, my heart's defile'd.

I've said too much; forbear the rest, my *Lycon*,
And let me die to save the black confession.

Lyc. Die then, but not alone; old faithful *Lycon*
Shall be a victim to your cruel silence.

Will you not tell? O lovely, wretched queen!
By all the cares of your first infant years,
By all the love, and faith, and zeal I've shew'd you,
Tell me your griefs, unfold your hidden sorrows,
And teach your *Lycon* how to bring you comfort.

Phæd. What shall I say, malicious cruel pow'rs.
O where shall I begin! O cruel *Venus*!
How fatal love has been to all our race!

Lyc. Forget it, madam, let it die in silence.

Phæd. O *Ariadne*! O unhappy sister!

Lyc. Cease to record your sister's grief and shame.

Phæd. And since the cruel god of love requires it,
I fall the last, and most undone of all.

Lyc. Do you then love?

Phæd. Alas, I groan beneath
The pain, the guilt, the shame of impious love.

Lyc. Forbid it heaven!

Phæd. Do not upbraid me, *Lycon*!
I love. — Alas! I shudder at the name:
My blood runs backward, and my fault'ring tongue
Sticks at the sound — I love. — O righteous heav'n!
Why was I born with such a fence of virtue,
So great abhorrence of the smalleſt crime,
And yet a slave to such impious guilt?
Rain on me, gods, your plagues, your sharpest tortures,
Afflict my soul with any thing but guilt,
And yet that guilt is mine. — I'll think no more.
I'll to the woods among the happier brutes:
Come, let's away: hark the shrill horn resounds,
The jolly huntmen's cries rend the wide heav'ns:
Come, o'er the hills pursue the bounding stag,
Come chase the lion and the foamy boar,
Come rouse up all the monsters of the wood;
For there, ev'n there, *Hippolitus* will guard me.

Lyc. *Hippolitus*?

Phæd. Who's he that names *Hippolitus*?
Ah! I'm betray'd, and all my guilt discover'd.

Oh!

Oh ! give me poison, swords, I'll not live, nor bear it ;
I'll stop my breath.

Hm. [aside] I'm lost, but what's that loss !

Hippolitus is lost, or lost to me :

Yet shou'd her charms prevail upon his soul,
Shou'd he be false, I wou'd not wish him ill,
With my last parting breath I'd bless my lord ?
Then in some lonely desart place expire,
Whence my unhappy death shall never reach him,
Lest it shou'd wound his peace, or damp his joys.

Lyc. Think still the secret in your royal breast,
For by the awful majesty of *Jove*,
By the all-seeing sun, by righteous *Minos*,
By all your kindred gods we swear, O *Phaedra*,
Safe as our lives we'll keep the fatal secret.

Hm. &c. We swear, all swear to keep it ever secret.

Phæd. Keep it ! from whom ? why 'tis already
known ;

The tale, the whisper of the babling vulgar :
Oh ! can you keep it from yourselves, unknow it ?
Or do you think I'm so far gone in guilt,
That I can see, can bear the looks, the eyes
Of one who knows my black detested crimes,
Of one who knows that *Phædra* loves her son ?

Lyc. Unhappy queen ! august, unhappy race !
Oh ! why did *Theseus* touch this fatal shore ?
Why did he save us from *Nicander's* arms,
To bring worse ruin on us by his love ?

Phæd. His love indeed ! for that unhappy hour,
In which the priests join'd *Theseus'* hand to mine,
Shew'd the young *Scythian* to my dazzled eyes.
Gods ! how I shook ! what boiling heat inflame'd
My panting breast ! how from the touch of *Theseus*
My flaccid hand dropt, and all the idle pomp,
Priests, altars, victims, swam before my sight !
The god of love, even the whole god, possest me.

Lyc. At once, at first possest you !

Phæd. Yes, at first,

That fatal evening we pursue'd the chase,
When from behind the wood, with rustling sound,
A monstrous boar rush'd forth ; his baleful eyes
Shot glaring fire, and his stiff pointing bristles

Rose high upon his back ; at me he made,
 Whetting his tusks, and churning hideous foam ?
 Then, then *Hippolitus* flew in to aid me ;
 Collecting all himself and rising to the blow,
 He launch'd the whistling spear ; the well-aim'd javelin
 Pierce'd his tough hide, and quiver'd in his heart ;
 The monster fell, and gnashing with huge tusks,
 Plow'd up the crimson earth. But then *Hippolitus* !
 Gods ! how he move'd and look'd, when he approach'd
 me !

When hot and panting from the savage conquest,
 Dreadful as *Mars*, and as his *Venus* lovely,
 His kindling cheeks with purple beauties glow'd,
 His lovely sparkling eyes shot martial fires :
 Oh godlike form ! oh ecstasie and transport !
 My breath grew short, my beating heart sprung
 upward,

And leap'd and bounded in my heaving bosom.
 Alas, I'm pleas'd, the horrid story charms me. —
 No more. — That night with fear and love I sicken'd.
 Oft I receive'd his fatal charming visits ;
 Then wou'd he talk with such an heav'nly grace,
 Look with such dear compassion on my pains,
 That I cou'd wish to be so sick for ever.
 My ears, my greedy eyes, my thirsty soul,
 Drank gorging in the dear delcious poison,
 'Till I was lost, quite lost in impious love :
 And shall I drag an execrable life ?

And shall I hoard up guilt, and treasure vengeance ?

Lyc. No ; labour, strive, subdue that guilt, and live.

Phæd. Did I not labour, strive, all-seeing powers !
 Did I not weep and pray, implore your aid ?
 Burnt clouds of incense on your loaded altars ?
 Oh ! I call'd heaven and earth to my assistance,
 All the ambitious thirst of fame and empire,
 And all the honest pride of conscious virtue :
 I struggled, raved, the new-born passion reign'd
 Almighty in its birth.

Lyc. Did you e'er try
 To gain his love ?

Phæd. Avert such crimes, ye pow'rs !
 No, to avoid his love, I sought his hatred ;
 I wrong'd

I wrong'd him, shunn'd him, banish'd him from *Crete*,
 I sent him, drove him from my longing sight :
 In vain I drove him; for his tyrant form
 Reign'd in my heart, and dwelt before my eyes.
 If to the gods I pray'd, the very vows
 I made to heaven, were, by my erring tongue,
 Spoke to *Hippolitus*. If I try'd to sleep,
 Straight to my drowsy eyes my restless fancy
 Brought back his fatal form, and curst my slumber.

Lyc. First let me try to melt him into love.

Phaed. No; did his hapless passion equal mine,
 I wou'd refuse the bliss I most desired,
 Consult my fame, and sacrifice my life:
 Yes, I wou'd die, heaven knows, this very moment,
 Rather than wrong my lord, my husband *Theseus*.

Lyc. Perhaps that lord, that husband is no more :
 He went from *Crete* in haste, his army then,
 To meet the numerous troops of fierce *Molossians* ;
 Yet tho' he lives, while ebbing life decays,
 Think on your son.

Phaed. Alas, that shocks me.
 O let me see my young one, let me snatch
 A hasty farewell, a last dying kiss.
 Yet stay, his sight will melt my just resolves ;
 But oh ! I beg, with my last faltering breath,
 Cherish my babe.

Enter messenger.

Mess. Madam, I grieve to tell you
 What you must know ; — your royal husband's dead.

Phaed. Dead ! oh ye pow'rs !

Lyc. [aside.] O fortunate event !
 Then earth-born *Lycon* may ascend the throne,
 Leave to his happy son the crown of *Jove*,
 And be adored like him. — Mourn, mourn, ye *Cretans*,
 Since he is dead whose valour saved your isle ;
 Whose prudent care with flowing plenty crown'd
 His peaceful subjects ; as your tow'ring *Ida*
 With spreading oaks, and with descending streams,
 Shades and enriches all the plains below.
 Say, how he dy'd.

Mess. He dy'd as *Theseus* ought,

In battle dy'd ; *Philotas*, now a prisoner,
 That rushing on fought next his royal person,
 That saw his thund'ring arm beat squadrons down,
 Saw the great rival of *Axides* fall :
 The'e eyes beheld his well-known steed, beheld
 A proud *Barbarian* glitt'ring in his arms,
 Encumber'd with the spoil.

Phæd. Is he then dead ?

Is my much injured lord, my *Theseus* dead ?
 And don't I shed one tear upon his urn ?
 What ! not a sigh, a groan, a soft complaint ?
 Ah ! these are tributes due from pious brides,
 From a chaste matron, and a virtuous wife :
 But savage love, the tyrant of my heart,
 Claims all my sorrows, and usurps my grief.

Lyc. Dismiss that grief, and give a loose to joy :
 He's dead, the bar of all your bliss is dead ;
 Live then, my queen, forget the wrinkled *Theseus*,
 And take the youthful hero to your arms.

Phæd. I dare not now admit of such a thought,
 And bleſſ'd be heaven that steeled my stubborn heart,
 That made me shun the bridal bed of *Theseus*,
 And give him empire, but refuse him love.

Lyc. Then may his happier son be bleſſ'd with both ;
 Then rouze your soul, and muster all your charms,
 Sooth his ambitious mind with thirst of empire,
 And all his tender thoughts with soft allurements.

Phæd. But should the youth refuse my proffer'd love ?
 O should he throw me from his loathing arms !
 I fear the tryal ; for I know *Hippolitus*
 Fierce in the right, and obstinately good :
 When round believ'd, his virtue, like a flood,
 Breaks with resistless force th' opposing dams,
 And bears the mounds along ; they're hurry'd on,
 And swell the torrent they were rais'd to stop.
 I dare not yet resolve : I'll try to live,
 And to the awful gods I'll leave the rest.

Lyc. Madam, your signet, that your slave may order
 What's most expedient for your royal service.

Phæd. Take it, and with it take the fate of *Phædra* :
 And thou, O *Venus*, aid a suppliant queen,
 That owns thy triumphs, and adores thy pow'r :

O spare

O spare thy captives, and subdue thy foes.
 On this cold *Scythian* let thy pow'r be known,
 And in a lover's cause assert thy own ;
 Then *Crete* as *Paphos* shall adore thy shrine ;
 This nurse of *Jove* with grateful fires shall shine,
 And with thy father's flames shall worship thine.

[Exit Phædra, &c.]

Lycon solus.

If she proposes love, why then as surely
 His haughty soul refuses it with scorn. —
 Say I confine him ! — If she dies he's safe ;
 And if she lives, I'll work her raging mind.
 A woman scorn'd with ease I'll work to vengeance ;
 With humble, fawning, wise, obsequious arts
 I'll rule the whirl and transport of her soul ;
 Then what her reason hates, her rage may act.

When barks glide slowly thro' the lazy main,
 The baffled pilots turn the helms in vain ;
 When driven by winds they cut the foamy way,
 The rudders govern, and the ships obey. [Exit.



A C T II.

Enter Phædra, Lycon, and Ismena.

Enter Messenger.

Mess. M A D A M, the prince *Hippolitus* attends.
Phæd. Admit him : Where, where's
Phædra, now thy soul ?

What — shall I speak ? and shall my guilty tongue
 Let this insulting victor know his pow'r ?
 Or shall I still confine within my breast
 My restless passions and devouring flames ?
 But see he comes, the lovely tyrant comes. —
 He rushes on me like a blaze of light ;
 I cannot bear the transport of his presence,
 But sink oppres'd with woe.

[Swoons.

B

Enter

Enter Hippolitus.

Hip. Immortal gods !

What have I done to raise such strange abhorrence ?
What have I done to shake her shrinking nature
With my approach, and kill her with my sight ?

Lyc. Alas, another grief devours her soul,
And only your assistance can relieve her.

Hip. Ha ! make it known, that I may fly and aid her.

Lyc. But promise first, my lord, to keep it secret.

Hip. Promise ? I swear, on this good sword I swear,
This fword, which first gain'd youthful *Theseus* honour !
Which oft has punish'd perjury and falsehood ;
By thundring *Jove*, by *Grecian Hercules*,
By the majettick form of godlike heroes,
That shine around, and consecrate the steel ;
No racks, no shame shall ever force it from me.

Phæd. *Hippolitus* !

Hip. Yes, 'tis that wretch, who begs you to dismiss
This hated object from your eyes for ever :
Begs leave to march against the foes of *Theseus*,
And to revenge, or share, his father's fate.

Phæd. Oh, *Hippolitus* !

I own I've wrong'd you, most unjustly wrong'd you.
Drove you from court, from *Crete*, and from your
father ;

The court, all *Crete*, deplored their suffering hero,
And I (the sad occasion) most of all.

Yet could you know relenting *Phædra*'s soul,
Oh could you think with what reluctant grief
I wrong'd the hero whom I wish'd to cherish !
Oh ! you'd confess me wretched, not unkind,
And own those ills did most deserve your pity,
Which most procured your hate.

Hip. My hate to *Phædra* ?

Ha ! could I hate the royal spouse of *Theseus*,
My queen, my mother ?

Phæd. Why your queen and mother ?
More humble ties best suit my lost condition.
Alas ! the iron hand of death is on me,
And I have only time t' implore your pardon.
Ah ! would my lord forget injurious *Phædra*,

And

And with compassion view her helpless orphan !
Would he receive him to his dear protection,
Defend his youth from all encroaching foes !

Hip. Oh, I'll defend him ! with my life defend him !
Heaven dart your judgments on this faithless head,
If I don't pay him all a slave's obedience,
And all a father's love.

Phed. A father's love !
Oh doubtful sounds ! oh vain deceitful hopes !
My grief's much ease'd by this transcending goodness,
And *Theseus'* death sits lighter on my soul :
Death ? he's not dead ! he lives, he breathes, he speaks,
He lives in you, he's present to my eyes ;
I see him, speak to him — my heart ! I rave,
And all my folly's known.

Hip. Oh ! glorious folly !
See *Theseus*, see how much your *Phædra* loved you.

Phed. Love him, indeed ! dote, languish, die for him,
Forsake my food, my sleep, all joys for *Theseus*.
(But not that hoary venerable *Theseus*)
But *Theseus* as he was, when mantling blood
Glow'd in his lovely cheeks ; when his bright eyes
Sparkled with youthful fires ; when ev'ry grace
Shone in the father, which now crowns the son ;
When *Theseus* was *Hippolitus*.

Hip. Ha ! amazement strikes me ;
Where will this end ?

Lyc. Is't difficult to guess ?
Does not her flying paleness that but now
Sat cold and languid in her fading cheek,
(Where now succeeds a momentary lustre,)
Does not her beating heart, her trembling limbs,
Her wishing looks, her speech, her present silence,
All, all proclaim imperial *Phædra* loves you ?

Hip. What do I hear ? what, does no lightning flash,
No thunder bellow, when such monstrous crimes
Are own'd, avow'd, confess ? all-seeing sun !
Hide, hide in shameful night, thy beamy head,
And cease to view the horrors of thy race.
Alas ! I share th' amazing guilt ; these eyes,
That first inspire'd the black incestuous flame,
These ears, that heard the tale of impious love,

Are all accurst, and all deserve your thunder.

Phæd. Alas, my lord ! believe me not so vile.
No : by thy goddess, by the chaste Diana,
None but my first, my much-love'd lord Arsamnes,
Was e'er receive'd in these unhappy arms.
No ! for the love of thee, of these dear charms,
Which now I see are doom'd to be my ruin,
I still deny'd my lord, my husband Theseus,
The chaste, the modest joys of spotless marriage :
That drove him hence to war, to stormy seas,
To rocks and waves less cruel than his Phædra.

Hip. If that drove Theseus hence, then that kill'd
Theseus,
And cruel Phædra kill'd her husband Theseus.

Phæd. Forbear, rash youth, nor dare to rouse my
vengeance ;
You need not urge, nor tempt my swelling rage
With black reproaches, scorn, and provocation,
To do a deed my reason would abhor.
Long has the secret struggled in my breast,
Long has it rack'd and rent my torture'd bosom ;
But now 'tis out. Shame, rage, confusion tear
And drive me on to act unheard-of crimes,
To murther thee, myself, and all that know it.
As when convulsions cleave the lab'ring earth,
Before the dismal yawn appears, the ground
Trembles and heaves, the nodding houses crash ;
He's safe, who from the dreadful warning flies,
But he that sees its opening bosom dies. [Exit.]

Hip. Then let me take the warning and retire ;
I'd rather trust the rough Ionian waves,
Than woman's fiercer rage.

[Ismena shews herself, lightning.

Lyc. Alas ! my lord,
You must not leave the queen to her despair.

Hip. Must not ? from thee ? from that vile upstart
Lycon ?

Lyc. Yes : from that Lycon who derives his greatness
From Phædra's race, and now would guard her life.
Then, sir, forbear, and view this royal signet,
And in her faithful slave obey the queen.

Enter Guards.

Guards, watch the prince, but at that awful distance,
With that respect, it may not seem confinement,
But only meant for honour.

Hip. So, confinement is
The honour *Crete* bestows on *Theseus'* son.
Am I confined ; and is't so soon forgot,
When fierce *Procrustes* arms o'er-ran your kingdom ?
When your streets echo'd with the cries of orphans ;
Your shrieking maids clung round the hollow'd
shrines,

When all your palaces and lofty towers
Smoak'd on the earth, when the red sky around
Glow'd with your city's flames (a dreadful lustre !)
Then, then my father flew to your assistance ;
Then *Theseus* saved your lives, estates, and honours.
And do you thus reward the hero's toil ?
And do you now confine the hero's son ?

Lyc. Take not an easie short confinement ill,
Which your own safety and the queen's requires :
But fear not aught from one that joys to serve you.

Hip. O, I didstain thee, traitor, but not fear thee,
Nor will I hear of services from *Lycos*.
Thy very looks are lies ; eternal falsehood
Smiles in thy lips, and flatters in thy eyes ;
Ev'n in thy humble face I read my ruin,
In ev'ry cringing bow and fawning smile :
Why else d' you whisper out your dark suspicions ?
Why with malignant elegies encrease
The people's fears, and praise me to my ruin ?
Why through the troubled streets of frightened *Gnossus*
Do bucklers, helms, and polish'd armour blaze ?
Why sounds the dreadful din of instant war ?
Whilst still the foe's unknown.

Lyc. [aside] Then quit thy arts,
Put off the statesman and resume the judge :
Thou *Proteus*, shifft thy various forms no more,
But boldly own the god. — * That foe's too near :

[* To Hippolitus.]

The queen's disease, and your aspiring mind
Disturb all *Crete*, and give a loose to war.

Hip. Gods! dares he speak thus to a monarch's son?
 And must this earth-born slave command in Crete?
 Was it for this my god-like father fought?
 Did Theseus bleed for Lycon? O ye Cretans,
 See there your king, the successor of Minos,
 And heir of Jove.

Lyc. You may as well provoke
 That Jove you worship, as this slave you scorn.
 Go seize Alcæon, Nicias, and all
 The black abettors of his impious treason.
 Now o'er thy head th' avenging thunder rolls:
 For know on me depends thy instant doom.
 Then learn, proud prince, to bend thy haughty soul;
 And if thou think'st of life, obey the queen.

Hip. Then free from fear or guilt I'll wait my doom:
 Whate'er's my fault, no stain shall blot my glory.
 I'll guard my honour, you dispose my life;

[*Exeunt* Lycon and Cratander.]

Since he dares brave my rage, the danger's near.
 The tim'rous hounds that hunt the generous lyon
 Bay afar off, and tremble in pursuit;
 But when he struggles in th' entangling toils,
 Insult the dying prey. — * 'Tis kindly done, Ifmena,

[* Ifmena enters.

With all your charms to visit my distress;
 Soften my chains, and make confinement easie.
 Is it then giv'n me to behold thy beauties!
 Those blushing sweets, those lovely loving eyes!
 To press, to strain thee to my beating heart,
 And grow thus to my love! What's liberty to this?
 What's fame or greatness? take 'em, take 'em Phœdra,
 Freedom and fame, and in the dear confinement
 Enclo'e me thus for ever.

Ifm. O Hippolitus!
 O I could ever dwell in this confinement!
 Nor wish for aught while I behold my lord;
 But yet that wish, that only wish, is vain,
 When my hard fate thus forces me to beg you,
 Drive from your godlike foul a wretched maid;
 Take to your arms, (afflit me heav'n to speak it)
 Take to your arms imperial Phœdra,

And

And think of me no more.

Hip. Not think of thee?

What! part, for ever part? Unkind *Ismena*:
 Oh, can you think that death is half so dreadful,
 As it would be to live, and live without thee?
 Say should I quit thee, should I turn to *Phaedra*,
 Say, could'st thou bear it? could thy tender soul
 Endure the torment of despairing love,
 And see me settled in a rival's arms?

Ism. Think not of me: perhaps my equal mind
 May learn to bear the fate the gods allot me
 Yet would you hear me; could your love'd *Ismena*.
 With all her charms, o'er-rule your full honour,
 You yet might live, nor leave the poor *Ismena*.

Hip. Speak; if I can, I'm ready to obey.

Ism. Give the queen hopes.

Hip. No more — my soul despairs it.
 No, should I try, my haughty soul would swell;
 Sharpen each word, and threaten in my eyes.
 O, should I stoop to cringe, to lie, forswear?
 Deserve the ruin which I strive to shun?

Ism. O, I can't bear this cold contempt of death!
 This rigid virtue, that prefers your glory
 To liberty of life. O cruel man!
 By these sad sighs, by these poor streaming eyes,
 By that dear love that makes us now unhappy,
 By the near danger of that precious life.
 Heav'n knows I value much above my own.

What! not yet moved? are you resolved on death?
 Then, e'er 'tis night, I swear by all the pow'rs
 This steel shall end my fears and life together.

Hip. You shan't be trusted with a life so precious.
 No, to the court I'll publish your design,
 Ev'n bloody *Lycon* will prevent your fate;
Lycon shall wrench the dagger from your bosom,
 And raving *Phaedra* will preserve *Ismena*.

Ism. *Phaedra!* come on, I'll lead you on to *Phaedra*;
 I'll tell her all the secrets of our love,
 Give to her rage her close destructive rival;
 Her rival sure will fall, her love may save you.
 Come see me labour in the pangs of death,
 My agonizing limbs, my dying eyes,

Dying,

Dying, yet fixt in death on my *Hippolitus*.

Hip. What's your design? ye pow'rs! what means
my love?

Ifm. She means to lead you in the road of fate;
She means to die with one she can't preserve.
Yet when you see me pale upon the earth,
This once loved form grown horrible in death,
Sure your resenting soul would wish you'd saved me.

Hip. Oh! I'll do all, do any thing to save you,
Give up my fame and all my darling honour:
I'll run, I'll fly; what you'll command I'll say.

Ifm. Say, what occasion, chance, or heav'n inspires;
Say, that you love her, that you loved her long;
Say, that you'll wed her, say that you'll comply:
Say, to preserve your life, say any thing.

[Exit Hippolitus.

Bless him, ye pow'rs! and if it be a cr me,
Oh! if the pious fraud offend your justice,
Aim all your vengeance on *Ifmena*'s head;
Punish *Ifmena*, but forgive *Hippolitus*.
He's gone, and now my brave resolves are stagger'd:
Now I repent, like some despairing wretch
That boldly plunges in the frightful deep,
Then pants, and it struggles with the whirling waves;
And catches every slender reed to save him.

Cho. But should he do what your commands enjoyn'd
him,

Say, should he wed her?

Ifm. Should he wed the queen?
Oh! I'd remember that 'twas my request,
And die well pleas'd I made the hero happy.

Cho. Die! does *Ifmena* then resolve to die?

Ifm. Can I then live? can I, who loved so well
To part with all my bliss to save my lover?
Oh! can I drag a wretched life without him,
And see another revel in his arms?
Oh! 'tis in death alone I can have comfort?

Enter Lycon.

Lyc. [aside] What a reverse is this? perfidious boy,
Is this thy truth? is this thy boasted honour?
Then all are rogues alike: I never thought

But

But one man honest, and that one deceives me.

Ismena here ! —

'Tis all agreed, and now the prince is safe
From the sure vengeance of despairing love.
Now *Phædra*'s rage is changed to soft endearments,
She doats, she dies ; and few, but tedious days,
With endless joys will crown the happy pair.

Ism. Does he then wed the queen ?

Lyc. At least I think so.

I, when the prince approach'd, not far retired
Pale with my doubts : he spoke ; th' attentive queen
Dwelt on his accents, and her gloomy eyes
Sparkled with gentler fires : he, blushing, bow'd ;
She, trembling, lost in love, with soft confusion
Received his passion, and return'd her own :
Then smiling turn'd to me, and bid me order
The pompous rites of her ensuing nuptials,
Which I must now pursue. Farewel, *Ismena*. [Exit.

Ism. Then I'll retire, and not disturb their joys.

Cho. Stay and learn more.

Ism. Ah ! wherefore should I stay ?
What ! shall I stay to rave, t' upbraid, to hold him,
To snatch the struggling charmer from her arms ?
For could you think that open gen'rous youth
Could with feign'd love deceive a jealous woman ?
Could he so soon grow artful in dissembling ?
Ah ! without doubt his thoughts inspired his tongue,
And all his soul received a real love.
Perhaps new graces darted from her eyes,
Perhaps soft pity charm'd his yielding soul,
Perhaps her love, perhaps her kingdom charm'd him ;
Perhaps — alas ! how many things may charm him !

Cho. Wait the success : it is not yet decided.

Ism. Not yet decided ! did not *Lycon* tell us
How he protested, sigh'd, and look'd, and vow'd ;
How the soft passion languish'd in his eyes ?
Yes, yes, he loves, he doats on *Phædra*'s charms.
Now, now he clasps her to his panting breast,
Now he devours her with his eager eyes,
Now grasps her hands, and now he looks, and vows
The dear false things that charm'd the poor *Ismena*.

He

He comes : be still, my heart, the tyrant comes,
Charming, tho' false, and lovely in his guilt.

Enter Hippolitus.

Hip. Why hangs that cloudy sorrow on your brow ?
Why do you sigh ? why flow your swelling eyes ?
Those eyes that used with joy to view *Hippolitus*.

Ijm. My lord, my soul is charm'd with your success ?
You know, my lord, my fears are but for you,
For your dear life ; and since my death alone
Can make you safe, that soon shall make you happy.
Yet had you brought less love to *Phædra's* arms,
My soul had parted with a less regret,
Blest if surviving in your dear remembrance.

Hip. Your death ! my love ! my marriage ! and to
Phædra !

Hear me, *Ijmena*.

Ijm. No, I dare not hear you.
But tho' you've been thus cruelly unkind,
Tho' you have left me for the royal *Phædra*,
Yet still my soul o'er-runs with fondness tow'rds you ?
Yet still I die with joy to save *Hippolitus*.

Hip. Die to save me ! could I outlive *Ijmena* ?

Ijm. Yes, you'd outlive her in your *Phædra's* arms,
And may you there find ev'ry blooming pleasure ;
Oh, may the gods show'r blessings on thy head !
May the gods crown thy glorious arms with conquest,
And all thy peaceful days with sure repose !
May it thou be blest with lovely *Phædra's* charms,
And, for thy ease, forget the lost *Ijmena* !

Farewel Hippolitus.

Hip. *Ijmena* stay,
Stay, hear me speak, or by th' infernal powers,
I'll not survive the minute you depart.

Ijm. What would you say ? ah ! don't deceive my
weakness.

Hip. Deceive thee ! why, *Ijmena*, do you wrong me ?
Why doubt my faith ? O lovely, cruel maid !
Why wound my tender soul with harsh suspicion !
Oh ! by those charming eyes, by thy dear love,
I neither thought nor spoke, design'd nor promis'd,
To love, or wed the queen.

Ijm.

Ifm. Speak on, my lord,
My honest soul inclines me to believe thee ;
And much I fear, and much I hope I've wrong'd thee.

Hip. Then thus, I came and spake, but scarce of love,
The easie queen received my faint address
With eager hope and unsuspicious faith.

Lycon, with seeming joy, dismiss'd my guards ;
My gen'rous soul disdain'd the mean deceit :
But still deceived her to obey *Ifmena*.

Ifm. Art thou then true ? thou art. Oh pardon me.
Pardon the errors of a silly maid,
Wild with her fears, and mad with jealousie ;
For still that fear, that jealousie was love.
Haste then, my lord, and save yourself by flight ;
And when you're absent, when your god-like form
Shall cease to chear forlorn *Ifmena's* eyes,
Then let each day, each hour, each minute bring
Some kind remembrance of your constant love ;
Speak of your health, your fortune, and your friends,
(For sure those friends shall have my tend'rest wishes)
Speak much of all ; but of thy dear, dear love,
Speak much, speak very much, and still speak on.

Hip. Oh ! thy dear love shall ever be my theme,
Of that alone I'll talk the live-long day ;
But thus I'll talk, thus dwelling on thy eyes,
Tafting the odours of thy fragrant bosom.
Come then to crown me with immortal joys,
Come, be the kind companion of my flight,
Come haste with me to leave this fatal shore ;
The barque before prepared for my departure,
Expect's i's freight ; a hundred lusty rowers
Have waved their sinewy arms, and call'd *Hippolitus* ;
The loosen'd canvas trembles with the wind,
And the sea whitens with auspicious gales.

Ifm. Fly then, my lord, and may the gods protect thee ;
Fly, ere insidious *Lycon* work thy ruin ;
Fly, ere my fondness talk thy life away :
Fly from the queen.

Hip. But not from my *Ifmena*.
Why do you force me from your heav'nly sight,
With those dear arms that ought to clasp me to thee ?

Ifm. Oh I could rave for ever at my fate !

And

And with alternate love and fear possess'd,
Now force thee from my arms, now snatch thee to my
breast,

And tremble 'till you go, but die 'till you return.

Nay, I could go — ye gods, if I should go,

What would fame say? if I should fly alone,

With a young lovely prince that charm'd my soul?

Hip. Say you did well to fly a certain ruin,

To fly the fury of a queen incensed,

To crown with endless joys the youth that loved you.

O! by the joys our mutual loves have brought,

By the blest hours I've languish'd at your feet,

By all the love you ever bore *Hippolitus*,

Come fly from hence, and make him ever happy.

Ism. Hide me, ye pow'rs! I never shall resist.

Hip. Will you refuse me? can I leave behind me

All that inspires my soul, and chears my eyes?

Will you not go? then here I'll wait my doom.

Come, raving *Phœdra*, bloody *Lycon* come!

I offer to your rage this worthless life,

Since 'tis no longer my *Ismena*'s care.

Ism. O! haste away, my lord, I go, I fly

Thro' all the dangers of the boist'rous deep.

When the wind whistles thro' the crackling masts,

When thro' the yawning ship the foaming sea

Rowls bubbling in; then, then I'll clasp thee fast,

And in transporting love forget my fear.

Oh! I will wander thro' the Scythian gloom,

O'er ice, and hills of everlasting snow;

There, when the horrid darknes shall enclose us,

When the bleak wind shall chill my shiv'ring limbs,

Thou shalt alone supply the distant sun,

And chear my gazing eyes, and warm my heart.

Hip. Come, let's away, and like another *Jason*

I'll bear my beauteous conquest thro' the seas:

A greater treasure, and a nobler prize

Than he from *Colchis* bore. Sleep, sleep in peace,

Ye monsters of the woods, on *Ida*'s top

Securely roam; no more my early horn

Shall wake the lazy day. Transporting love

Reigns in my heart, and makes me all its own.

So when bright *Venus* yielded up her charms,
 The blest *Adonis* languish'd in her arms ;
 His idle horn on fragrant myrtles hung,
 His arrows scatter'd, and his bow unstrung :
 Obscure in coverts lie his dreaming hounds,
 And bay the fancy'd boar with feeble sounds.
 For nobler sports he quits the savage fields,
 And all the hero to the lover yields.



A C T III.

Enter Lycon.

Lyc. **H**EAV'N is at last appeased : the pitying gods
 Have heard our wishes, and auspicious *Jove*
 Smiles on his native isle ; for *Phædra* lives,
 Restored to *Crete*, and to herself she lives ;
 Joy with fresh strength inspires her drooping limbs,
 Revives her charms, and, o'er her faded cheeks,
 Spreads a fresh rosy bloom, as kindly springs
 With genial heat renew the frozen earth,
 And paint its smiling face with gaudy flow'rs.
 But see she comes, the beauteous *Phædra* comes.

Enter Phædra.

How her eyes sparkle ! how their radiant beams
 Confess their shining ancestor the sun !
 Your charms to day will wound despairing crowds,
 And give the pains you suffer'd : Nay, *Hippolitus*,
 The fierce, the brave, th' insensible *Hippolitus*,
 Shall pay a willing homage to your beauty,
 And in his turn adore —

Phæd. 'Tis flatt'r all ;
 Yet, when you name the prince, that flatt'r'y's pleasing.
 You wish it so, poor good old man, you wish it.
 The fertile province of *Cydonia*'s thine ;
 Is there aught else ? has happy *Phædra* aught,
 In the wide circle of her far-stretch'd empire ?
 Ask, take, my friend, secure of no repulse.
 Let spacious *Crete*, thro' all her hundred cities,
 Resound her *phædra*'s joy. — Let altars smoak,
 And richest gums, and spice, and incense roll

C

Their

Their fragrant wreaths to heav'n, to pitying heav'n,
 Which gives *Hippolitus* to *Phædra's* arms.
 Set all at large, and bid the loathsome dungeons
 Give up the meagre slaves that pine in darkness,
 And waste in grief, as did despairing *Phædra* ;
 Let them be clear'd, let the starved prisoners riot,
 And glow with gen'rous wine. — Let sorrow cease.
 Let none be wretched, none, since *Phædra's* happy.
 But now he comes, and, with an equal passion,
 Rewards my flame, and springs into my arms !

Enter Messenger.

Say, where's the prince ?

Mess. He's no where to be found.

Phæd. Perhaps he hunts.

Mess. He hunted not to day.

Phæd. Ha ! have you search'd the walks, the courts,

Mess. Search'd all in vain. [the temples ?

Phæd. Did he not hunt to day ?

Alas ! you told me once before he did not :

My heart misgives me.

Lyc. So, indeed, doth mine.

Phæd. Could he deceive me ? cou'd that godlike youth
 Design the ruin of a queen that loves him ?

Oh ! he's all truth ; his words, his looks, his eyes

Open to view his inmost thoughts. — He comes !

Ha ! who art thou ? whence come'st thou ? where's *Hip-*

Mess. Madam, *Hippolitus*, with fair *Ilymena*, [*politus* ?
 Drove tow'r'd the port. —

Phæd. With fair *Ilymena* !

Curst be her cruel beauty, curst her charms,

Curst all heroothing, fatal, false endearments.

That heav'nly virgin, that exalted goodness,

Cou'd see me torture'd with despairing love,

With artful tears cou'd mourn my monstrous suff'rings,

While her base malice plotted my destruction.

Lyc. A thousand reasons croud upon my soul,
 That evidence their love.

Phæd. Yes, yes, they love ;

Why else should he refuse my proferr'd bed ?

Why should one warm'd with youth, and thirst of glory,
 Disdain a soul, a form, a crown like mine ?

Lyc. Where, *Lycon*, where was then thy boasted
 cunning ?

Dull

Dull thoughtless wretch !

Phæd. O pains unfelt before !

The grief, despair, the agonies and pangs,
All the wild fury of distracted love,
Are nought to this — Say, famous politician,
Where, when, and how did their first passion rise ?
Where did they breathe their sighs ? what shady groves,
What gloomy woods conceal'd their hidden loves ?
Alas ! they hid it not : the well pleased sun,
With all his beams, survey'd their guiltless flame ;
Glad Zephyrs wafted their untainted sighs ;
And *he* echo'd their endearing accents.
While I, the shame of nature, hid in darkness,
Far from the balmy air and cheering light,
Press'd down my sighs, and dry'd my falling tears,
Search'd a retreat to mourn, and watch'd to grieve.

Lyc. Now cease that grief, and let your injured love
Contrive due vengeance ; let majestick *Phœdra*,
That love'd the hero, sacrifice the villain.
Then haste, send forth your ministers of vengeance,
To snatch the traitor from your rival's arms,
And force him, trembling, to your awful presence.

Phæd. O rightly thought — dispatch th' attending
guards ;
Bid them bring forth their instruments of death ;
Darts, engines, flames, and launch into the deep,
And hurl swift vengeance on the perjur'd slave.
Where am I, gods ? what is't my rage commands ?
Ev'n now he's gone ! ev'n now the well-time'd oars,
With sounding stroaks, divide the sparkling waves,
And happy gales assist their speedy flight.
Now they embrace, and ardent love enflames
Their flushing cheeks, and trembles in their eyes.
Now they expose my weakness and my crimes :
Now to the sporting croud they tell my follies.

Enter Cratander.

Crat. Sir, as I went to seize the persons order'd
I met the prince ; and with him fair *Ismena* ;
I seiz'd the prince, who now attends without.

Phæd. Haste, bring him in.

Lyc. Be quick and seize *Ismena*.

Enter Hippolitus.

Phæd. Cou'dst thou deceive me? cou'd a son of *Theseus*,
Stoop to so mean, so base a vice as fraud?
Nay, act such monstrous perfidy, yet start
From promis'd love?

Hip. My soul disdain'd a promise.

Phæd. But yet your false equivocating tongue,
Your looks, your eyes, your ev'ry motion promis'd.
But you are ripe in frauds, and learn'd in falsehoods.
Look down, O *Theseus*, and behold thy son:
As Sciron faithless, as *Procrustes* cruel.

Behold the crimes, the tyrants, all the monsters,
From which thy valour purge'd the groaning earth:
Behold them all in thy own son revive'd.

Hip. Touch not my glory, lest you stain your own;
I still have strove to make my glorious father
Blush, yet rejoice to see himself outdone;
To mix my parents in my lineal virtues,
As *Theseus* just, and as *Camilla* chaste.

Phæd. The godlike *Theseus* never was thy parent.
No, 'twas some monthly *Cappadocian* drudge,
Obedient to the scourge, and beaten to her arms,
Begot thee, traytor, on the chaste *Camilla*.
Camilla chaste! an *Amazon* and chaste!
That quits her sex, and yet retains her virtue.
See the chaste matron mount the neighing steed:
In strict embraces lock the struggling warrior,
And choose the lover in the sturdy foe.

Enter Messenger, and seems to talk earnestly with Lycon.

Hip. No; she refused the vows of godlike *Theseus*,
And chose to stand his arms, not meet his love;
And doubtful was the fight. The wide *Thermodoon*
Heard the huge stroaks resound; its frightened waves
Convey'd the ratt'ling din to distant shores,
Whilist she alone supported all his war:
Nor 'till she sank beneath his thund'ring arm,
Beneath which warlike nations bow'd, wou'd yield
To honest wish'd-for love.

Phæd Not so her son;
Who boldly ventures on forbidden flames,
On one descended from the cruel *Pallas*,
Foe to thy father's person and his blood;

Hated

Hated by him, of kindred yet more hated,
The last of all the wicked race he ruin'd.
In vain a fierce successive hatred reign'd
Between your fires: in vain, like *Cadmus'* race,
With mingled blood they dy'd the blushing earth:

Hip. In vain indeed, since now the war is o'er;
We, like the *Theban* race, agree to love,
And by our mutual flames, and future offspring,
Atone for slaughter past.

Phæd. Your future offspring!
Heav'ns! what a medly's this? what dark confusion,
Of blood and death, of murder and relation?
What joy 't had been to old disabled *Theseus*,
When he should take the offspring in his arms?
Ev'n in his arms to hold an infant *Pallas*,
And be upbraided with his grandfire's fate.
Oh barb'rous youth!

Lyc. Too barbarous I fear.
Perhaps ev'n now his faction's up in arms,
Since waving crouds roll onwards tow'rds the palace,
And rend the city with tumultuous clamours?
Perhaps to murder *Phædra* and her son,
And give the crown to him and his *Ismena*:
But I'll prevent it. [Exit Lycon.]

Ismena brought in.

Phæd. What! the kind *Ismena*, [me,
That nurs'd me, watch'd my sickness! oh, she watch'd
As rav'nous vultures watch the dying lion,
To tear his heart, and riot in his blood.
Hark! hark my little infant cries for justice.
Oh! be appeased my babe, thou shalt have justice.
Now all the spirits of my godlike race
Enflame my soul, and urge me on to vengeance.

Arjannes, Minos, Jove, th' avenging Sun,
Inspire my fury, and demand my justice.
Oh! you shall have it; thou, *Minos*, shalt applaud it;
Yes, thou shalt copy it in their pains below.
Gods of revenge arise.—He comes! he comes!
And shoots himself thro' all my kindling blood.
I have it here.—Now base, perfidious wretch,
Now sigh, and weep, and tremble in thy turn.
Yes, your *Ismena* shall appease my vengeance.

Ismena dies ; and thou, her pitying lover,
Doom'd her to death. — Thou too shalt see her blood ;
See her convulsive pangs, and hear her dying groans :
Go, glut thy eyes with thy adored *Ismena*,
And laugh at dying *Phædra*.

Hip. Oh ! *Ismena* !

Ism. Alas ! my tender soul would shrink at death,
Shake with its fears, and sink beneath its pains,
In any cause but this. — But now I'm steel'd,
And the near danger lessens to my sight.
Now, if I live, 'tis only for *Hippolitus* ;
And with an equal joy I'll die to save him.
Yes, for his sake, I'll go a willing shade,
And wait his coming in th' *Elysian* fields,
And there enquire of each descending ghost,
Of my loved hero's welfare, life, and honour ;
That dear remembrance will improve the bliss,
Add to th' *Elysian* joys, and make that heav'n more happy.

Hip. [aside] Oh heavenly virgin ! O imperial *Phædra*,
Let your rage fall on this devoted head ;
But spare, oh spare a guiltless virgin's life :
Think of her youth, her innocence, her virtue ;
Think with what warm compassion she bemoan'd you :
Think how she served and watch'd you in your sickness !
How ev'ry rising and descending sun
Saw kind *Ismena* watching o'er the queen.
I only promised, I alone deceived you ;
And I, and only I, should feel your justice. [answer]

Ism. Oh ! by those pow'rs, to whom I soon must
For all my faults, by that bright arch of heav'n
I now last see, I wrought him by my wiles,
By tears, by threats, by ev'ry female art,
Wrought his disdaining soul to false compliance.
The son of *Theseus* could not think of fraud,
'Twas woman all.

Phæd. I see 'twas woman all ; [geance.
And woman's fraud shou'd meet with woman's ven-
But yet thy courage, truth, and virtue shock me :
A love so warm, so firm, so like my own.
Oh ! had the gods to pleas'd, had bounteous heav'n
Bestow'd *Hippelitus* on *Phædra*'s arms,
So had I stood the shock of angry fate ;

So had I give'n my life with joy to save him.

Hip. And can you doom her death? can *Minos'* daughter
Condemn the virtue which her soul admires?
Are not you *Phædra*? once the boast of fame,
Shame of our sex, and pattern of your own.

Phæd. Am I that *Phædra*? No. — Another soul
Informs my alter'd frame. Cou'd else *Ilymena*
Provoke my hatred, yet deserve my love?
Aid me, ye gods, support my sinking glory,
Restore my reason, and confirm my virtue.
Yet, is my rage unjust? then, why was *Phædra*
Rescued from torment, and preserved for pain?
Why did you raise me to the heighth of joy,
Above the wreck of clouds and storms below,
To dash and break me on the ground for ever?

Ilym. Was it not time to urge him to compliance?
At least to feign it, when perfidious *Lycon*
Confine'd his person, and conspired his death. [Lycon!]

Phæd. Confine'd and doom'd to death! — O cruel
Cou'd I have doom'd thy death? — cou'd these sad eyes
That loved thee living, e'er behold thee dead?
Yet thou couldst see me die without concern,
Rather than save a wretched queen from ruin.
Else cou'd you choose to trust the warring winds,
The swelling waves, the rocks, the faithless sands,
And all the raging monsters of the deep!
Oh! think you see me on the naked shoar,
Think how I scream and tear my scatter'd hair:
Break from th' embraces of my shrieking maids,
And harrow on the sand my bleeding bosom; [lows,
Then catch, with wide-stretch'd arms, the empty bil-
And headlong plunge into the gaping deep.

Hip. O dismal state! my bleeding heart relents,
And all my thoughts dissolve in tend'rest pity.

Phæd. If you can pity, oh! refuse not love;
But stoop to rule in *Crete*, the seat of heroes,
And nursery of gods. — A hundred cities
Court thee for lord, where the rich busy crowds
Struggle for passage thro' the spacious streets;
Where thousand ships o'ershade the less'ning main,
And tire the lab'ring wind. The suppliant nations
Bow to its ensigns, and, with lower'd sails,

Confess the ocean's queen. For thee alone
 The winds shall blow, and the vast ocean roll.
 For thee alone the fame'd *Cydonian* warriors
 From twanging euchs shall send their fatal shafts.

Hip. Then let me march their leader, not their prince?
 And at the head of your renown'd *Cydonians*,
 Brandish this far-fame'd sword of conqu'ring *Theseus*;
 That I may shake th' *Egyptian* tyrant's yoke
 From *Asia*'s neck, and fix it on his own;
 That willing nations may obey your laws,
 And your bright ancestor, the sun, may shine
 On nought but *Phœdra*'s empire.

Phœd. Why not thine?
 Dost thou so far detest my proferr'd bed,
 As to refuse my crown? — O, cruel youth!
 By all the pain that wrings my tortured soul!
 By all the dear deceitful hopes you gave me,
 O! cease; at least once more delude my sorrows.
 For your dear sake I've lost my darling honour;
 For you, but now, I'd give my soul to death;
 For you I'd quit my crown, and stoop beneath
 The happy bondage of an humble wife.
 With thee I'd climb the steepy *Iua*'s summit,
 And in the scorching heat and chilling dews,
 O'er hills, o'er vales, pursue the shaggy lion;
 Careless of danger, and of wasting toil;
 Of pinching hunger, and impatient thirst;
 I'd find all joys in thee.

Hip. Why stoops the queen
 To ask, intreat, to supplicate and pray,
 To prostitute her crown and sex's honour,
 To one whose humble thoughts can only rise
 To be your slave, not lord?

Phœd. And is that all?
 Gods! does he deign to force an artful groan?
 Or call a tear from his unwilling eyes?
 Hard as his native rocks, cold as his sword,
 Fierce as the wolves that howl'd around his birth,
 He hates the tyrant, and the suppliant scorns.
 Oh Heav'n! O *Minoz*! O imperial *Jove*!
 Do ye not blush at my degenerate weakness?
 Hence lazy, mean, ignoble passion fly;

Hence from my soul — 'Tis gone, 'tis fled for ever,
 And heav'n inspires my thoughts with righteous ven-
 Thou shalt no more despise my offer'd love; [geance.
 No more *Ilymena* shall upbraid my weakness.

[Catches Hippolitus's sword to stab herself.

Now all ye kindred gods look down, and see,
 How I'll revenge you, and myself, on *phædra*.

Enter Lycon, and snatches away the sword.

Lyc. Horror on horror! *Theseus* is return'd.

Phæd. *Theseus*! then what have I to do with life;
 May I be snatch'd with winds, by earth o'erwhelm'd,
 Rather than view the face of injur'd *Theseus*.

Now wider still my growing horrors spread,
 My fame, my virtue, nay, my frenzy's fled:
 Then view thy wretched blood, imperial *Jove*!
 If crimes enrage you, or misfortunes move;
 On me your flames, on me your bolts employ,
 Me, if your anger spares, your pity should destroy.

[Runs off.

Lyc. This may do service yet.

[Exit Lycon, carries off the sword.

Hip. Is he return'd: thanks to the pitying gods.

Shall I again behold his awful eyes?

Again be folded in his loving arms?

Yet in the midst of joy I fear for *phædra*;

I fear his warmth and unrelenting justice.

O! should her raging passion reach his ears,

His tender love, by anger fire'd, wou'd turn

To burning rage; as soft *Cydonian* oyl,

Whose balmy juice glides o'er th' untastring tongue,

Yet, toucht with fire, with hottest flames will blaze.

But oh ye pow'rs! I see his godlike form.

O extasie of joy! he comes, he comes!

Is it my lord? my father? Oh! 'tis he:

I see him, touch him, feel his known embraces,

See all the father in his joyful eyes.

Enter Theseus, with others.

Where have you been, my lord? what angry dæmon
 Hid you from Crete; from me? — what god has save'd
 you?

Did not *Philotas* see you fall? O answer me!
 And then I'll ask a thousand queltions more.

Theseus.

Theſ. No: but to ſave my life I feign'd my death;
 My horſe and well-known arms confirm'd the tale,
 And hinder'd farther ſearch. This honest Greek
 Conceal'd me in his house, and cure'd my wounds:
 Procure'd a veſſel; and, to bleſs me more,
 Accompany'd my flight.—

But this at leisu're. Let me now indulge
 A father's fondneſs; let me ſnatch thee thus;
 Thus fold thee in my arms. Such, ſuch was I

[Embraces Hippolitus.]

When firſt I ſaw thy mother, chaſte *Comilla*;
 And much ſhe love'd me.—Oh! did *Phedra* view me
 With half that fondneſs! — but ſhe's ſtill unkind!
 Else hasty joy had brought her to theſe arms,
 To welcome me to liberty, to life;
 And make that life a bleſſing. Come, my ſon,
 Let us to *Phedra*.

Hip. Pardon me, my lord.

Theſ. Forget her former treatment; ſhe's too good
 Still to perſiſt in hatred to my ſon.

Hip. O! let me fly from *Crete*, from you, [aſide] and
Phedra.

Theſ. My ſon, what means this turn? this ſudden start?
 Why would you fly from *Crete*, and from your father?

Hip. Not from my father, but from lazy *Crete*;
 To follow danger, and acquire renown;
 To quell the monsters that escape'd your ſword,
 And make the world confeſs me *Theseus'* ſon.

Theſ. What can this coldneſs mean? Retire, my ſon,
 [Exit Hippolitus.]

While I attend the queen.—What ſhock is this?
 Why tremble thus my limbs? why faints my heart?
 Why am I thrill'd with fear, 'till now unknown?
 Where's now the joy, the extaſie, and tranſport,
 That warm'd my ſoul, and urge'd me on to *Phedra*?
 O! had I never love'd her, I'd been bleſt.

Sorrow and joy in love alternate reign;
 Sweet is the bliſs, distracting is the pain.
 So when the *Nile* its fruitful deluge spreads,
 And genial heat informs its ſlimy beds,
 Here yellow harveſts crown the fertile plain,
 There monſtrous ſerpents fright the lab'ring ſwain:

A various

A various product fills the fatten'd sand,
And the same floods enrich, and curse the land.

A C T IV.

Enter Lycon solus.

Lyc. **T**HIS may gain time, 'till all my wealth's
embark'd,
To ward my foes revenge, and finish mine,
And shake that empire which I can't possess.
But then the queen — she dies — why let her die ;
Let wide destruction seize on all together,
So *Lycon* live. — A safe triumphant exile,
Great in disgrace, and envy'd in his fall.
The queen ! — then try thy art and work her passions ;

Enter Phædra and Attendants.

Draw her to act what most her soul abhors,
Possess her whole, and speak thyself in *Phædra*.

Phæd. Off, let me loose ; why, cruel barb'rous maids,
Why am I barr'd from death, the common refuge,
That spreads its hospitable arms for all ?
Why must I drag th' unsufferable load
Of foul dishonour, and despairing love ?
Oh ! length of pain ! am I so often dying,
And yet not dead ? feel I so oft death's pangs ?
Nor once can find its ease ?

Lyc. Would you now die ?

Now quit the field to your insulting foe ?
Then shall he triumph o'er your blasted name :
Ages to come, the universe shall learn
The wide immortal infamy of *Phædra* ?
And the poor babe, the idol of your soul,
The lovely image of your dear dead lord,
Shall be upbraided with his mother's crimes ;
Shall bear your shame, shall sink beneath your faults ;
Inherit your disgrace, but not your crown.

Phæd. Must he too fall involve'd in my destruction,
And only live to curse the name of *Phædra* ?
Oh, dear, unhappy babe ! must I bequeath thee

Only

Only a sad inheritance of woe?

Gods! cruel gods! can't all my pains atone,

Unless they reach my infant's guiltless head?

Oh lost estate! when life's so sharp a torment,

And death itself can't ease! assist me, *Lycos*,

Advise, speak comfort to my troubled soul.

Lyc. 'Tis you must drive that trouble from your soul; As streams, when dam'd, forget their antient current, And, wond'ring at their banks, in other channels flow; So must you bend your thoughts from hopeless love, So turn their course to *Theseus'* happy bosom, And crown his eager hopes with wish'd enjoyment: Then with fresh charms adorn your troubled looks, Display the beauties first inspire'd his soul, Sooth with your voice, and woe him with your eyes.

Phæd. Impossible! what woe him with these eyes, Still wet with tears that flow'd? — but not for *Theseus*. This tongue so used to sound another name?

What! take him to my arms! oh awful *Juno*! Touch, love, caress him while my wand'ring fancy On other objects strays? a lewd adulteress In the chaste bed? and in the father's arms, (Oh horrid thought! oh execrable incest!) Ev'n in the father's arms embrace the son?

Lyc. Yet you must see him, lest impatient love Shou'd urge his temper to too nice a search, And ill-time'd absence should disclose your crime.

Phæd. Could I, when present to his awful eyes, Conceal the wild disorders of my soul? Wou'd not my groans, my looks, my speech betray me? Betray thee, *Phædra*! then thou'rt not betray'd: Live, live secure, adoring *Crete* conceals thee; Thy pious love, and most endearing goodness Will charm the kind *Hippolitus*: o silence. Oh wretched *Phædra*! oh ill-guarded secret: To foes alone disclosed!

Lyc. I needs must fear them, Spight of their oaths, their vows, their imprecations.

Phæd. Do imprecations, oaths, or vows avail?

I too have sworn, ev'n at the altar sworn

Eternal love and endless faith to *Theseus*;

And yet am false, forsworn: the hallow'd shrine,

That

That heard me swear, is witness to my falsehood.
 The youth, the very author of my crimes,
 Ev'n he shall tell the fault himself inspire'd ;
 The fatal eloquence that charm'd my soul
 Shall lavish all its art to my destruction.

Lyc. Oh he will tell it all. — Destruction seize him !
 With seeming grief, and aggravating pity,
 And more to blacken, will excuse your folly ;
 False tears shall wet his unrelenting eyes,
 And his glad heart with artful sighs shall heave :
 Then *Theseus* — how will indignation swell
 His mighty heart ? how his majestick frame
 Will shake with rage too fierce, too swift for vent ?
 How he'll expose you to the publick scorn,
 And loathing crowds shall murmur out their horror ?
 Then the fierce *Scythian* — now, methinks, I see
 His fiery eyes with sullen pleasures glow,
 Survey your tortures, and insult your pangs ;
 I see him, smiling on the pleas'd *Ismena*,
 Point out, with scorn, the once proud tyrant *Phædra*.

Phæd. Curst be his name ! may infamy attend him ;
 May swift destruction fall upon his head,
 Hurl'd by the hand of thole he most adores.

Lyc. By heav'n, prophetick truth inspires your tongue ;
 He shall endure the shame he means to give ;
 And all the torments which he heaps on you,
 With just revenge shall *Theseus* turn on him.

Phæd. Is't possible ? oh *Lycon* ! oh my refuge !
 Oh good old man ! thou oracle of wisdom !
 Declare the means, that *Phædra* may adore thee.

Lyc. Accuse him first.

Phæd. Oh heav'ns ! accuse the guiltless ?

Lyc. Then be accuse'd ; let *Theseus* know your crime :
 Let lasting infamy o'erwhelm your glory ;
 Let your toe triumph, and your infant fall —
 Shake off this idle lethargy of pity,
 With ready war prevent th' invading foe,
 Preserve your glory, and secure your vengeance :
 Be yours the fruit, security, and ease ;
 The guilt, the danger, and the labour mine.

Phæd. Heav'ns, *Theseus* comes !

Enter Theseus.

Lyc. Declare your last resolves.

Phæd. Do you resolve, for Phædra can do nothing.

[*Exit Phædra.*]

Lyc. Now, Lycon, heighten his impatient love,
Now raise his pity, now inflame his rage,
Quicken his hopes, then quash 'em with despair ;
Work his tumultuous passions into frenzy ;
Unite 'em all, then turn them on the foe.

Thes. Was that my queen, my wife, my idol, Phædra ?
Does she still shun me ? oh injurious heav'n :
Why did you give me back again to life ?
Why did you save me from the rage of battle,
To let me fall by her more fatal hatred ? [ness,

Lyc. Her hatred ! no, she loves you with such fond-
As none but that of Theseus e'er could equal ;
Yet so the gods have doom'd, so heav'n will have it,
She ne'er must view her much-loved Theseus more.

Thes. Not see her ! by my suff'rings but I will,
Tho' troops embattled should oppose my passage,
And ready death shou'd guard the fatal way.
Not see her ! oh I'll clasp her in these arms,
Break thro' the idle bands that yet have held me,
And seize the joys my honest love may claim.

Lyc. Is this a time for joy ? when Phædra's grief —

Thes. Is this a time for grief ? is this my welcome
To air, to life, to liberty, and Crete ?
Not this I hoped, when urged by ardent love,
I wing'd my eager way to Phædra's arms ;
Then to my thoughts relenting Phædra flew,
With open arms to welcome my return,
With kind endearing blame condemn'd my rashness,
And made me swear to venture out no more.
Oh ! my warm soul, my boiling fancy glow'd
With charming hopes of yet untasted joys ;
New pleasures fill'd my mind, all dangers, pains,
Wars, wounds, defeats, in that dear hope were lost.
And does she now avoid my eager love,
Pursue me still with unrelenting hatred,
Invent new pains, detest, loath, shun my sight,
Fly my return, and sorrow for my safety ?

Lyc. O think not so ! for, by the unerring gods,

When

When first I told her of your wish'd return,
 When the loved name of *Theseus* reach'd her ears,
 At that dear name she rear'd her drooping head,
 Her feeble hands, and wat'ry eyes, to heav'n,
 To bless the bounteous gods: at that dear name
 The raging tempest of her grief was calm'd;
 Her sighs were hush'd, and tears forgot to flow.

Thes. Did my return bring comfort to her sorrow?
 Then haste, conduct me to the lovely mourner:
 Oh I will kiss the pearly drops away;
 Suck from her rosie lips the fragrant sighs;
 With other sighs her panting breast shall heave,
 With other dews her swimming eyes shall melt,
 With other pangs her throbbing heart shall beat,
 And all her sorrows shall be lost in love.

Lyc. Does *Theseus* burn with such unheard-of passion?
 And must not she with out-stretch'd arms receive him?
 And with an equal ardour meet his vows?
 The vows of one so dear! oh righteous gods!
 Why must the bleeding heart of *Theseus* bear
 Such tort'ring pangs? while *Phædra*, dead to love,
 Now with accusing eyes on angry heav'n
 Stedfastly gazes, and upbraids the gods;
 Now with dumb piercing grief, and humble shame,
 Fixes her gloomy watry orbs to earth;
 Now burst with swelling anguish, rends the skies
 With loud complaints of her outrageous wrongs?

Thes. Wrong'd! is she wrong'd? and lives he yet
 who wrong'd her?

Lyc. He lives, so great, so happy, so beloved,
 That *Phædra* scarce can hope, scarce wish revenge.

Thes. Shall *Theseus* live, and not revenge his *Phædra*?
 Gods! shall this arm, renown'd for righteous vengeance,
 For quelling tyrants, and redressing wrongs,
 Now fail? now first, when *Phædra*'s injured, fail?
 Speak, *Lycon*, haste, declare the secret villain,
 The wretch so meanly base to injure *Phædra*,
 So rashly brave to dare the sword of *Theseus*.

Lyc. I dare not speak, but sure her wrongs are mighty:
 The pale cold hue that deadens all her charms,
 Her sighs, her hollow groans, her flowing tears,
 Make me suspect her monst'rous grief will end her.

Theſ. End her? end *Theseus* first, and all mankind;
But moſt that villain, that deteſted slave,
That brutal coward, that dark-lurking wretch.

Lyc. Oh noble heat of unexampled love!
This *Phædra* hoped, when in the midſt of grief,
In the wild torrent of o'erwhelming ſorrows,
She groaning ſtill invoked, ſtill call'd on *Theseus*.

Theſ. Did ſhe then name me? did the weeping charmer
Invoke my name, and call for aid on *Theseus*?
Oh that loved voice upbraided my delay.
Why then this ſtay? I come, I fly, oh *Phædra*!
Lead on — now, dark disturber of my peace,
If now thou'rt known, what luxury of vengeance —
Haste, lead, conduct me.

Lyc. Oh! I beg you ſtay.

Theſ. What! ſtay when *Phædra* calls?

Lyc. Oh! on my knees,
By all the gods, my lord, I beg you ſtay;
As you reſpect your peace, your life, your glory:
As *Phædra*'s days are precious to your foul;
By all your love, by all her ſorrows, ſtay.

Theſ. Where lies the danger? wherefore ſhould I ſtay?

Lyc. Your ſudden presence would ſurprize her foul,
Renew the galling image of her wrongs,
Revive her sorrow, indignation, shame,
And all your ſon would ſtrike her from your eyes.

Theſ. My ſon? — but he's too good, too brave, to
wrong her. [ſurprise,

— Whence then that ſhocking change, that ſtrong
That fright that feiz'd him at the name of *Phædra*?

Lyc. Was he ſurprize'd? that ſhew'd at least remorse.

Theſ. Remorse! for what? by heav'ns, my troubled
thoughts

Preſage ſome dire attempt. — Say, what remorse.

Lyc. I wou'd not, — yet I muſt. — This you command;
This *Phædra* orders; thrice her fault'ring tongue
Bade me unfold the guilty ſcene to *Theseus*:
Thrice with loud cries recall'd me on my way,
And blamed my speed, and chid my rafh obedience,
Lest the unwelcome tale ſhou'd wound your peace.
At laſt, with looks ſerenely ſad, ſhe cry'd,
Go tell it all; but in ſuch artful words,

Such

Such tender accents, and such melting sounds,
As may appease his rage, and move his pity ;
As may incline him to forgive his son
A grievous fault, but still a fault of love.

Theſ. Of love ! what ſtrange ſuspicion ſwrack my ſoul ?
As you regard my peace, declare, what love ?

Lyc. So urged I muſt declare ; yet, pitying heav'n,
Why muſt I ſpeak ? why muſt unwilling *Lycon*
Accufe the prince of impious love to *Phædra* ?

Theſ. Love to his mother ! to the wife of *Theseus* ?

Lyc. Yes, at the moment firſt he view'd her eyes,
Ev'n at the altar, when you join'd your hands,
His eaſy heart received the guilty flame,
And from that time he preſt her with his paſſion.

Theſ. Then 'twas for thiſ ſhe baniſh'd him from *Crete* ;
I thought it hatred all : oh righteous hatred !
Forgiue me, heav'n ; forgiue me, injure'd *Phædra*,
That I in ſecret have condemnd thy justice.
Oh ! 'twas all juſt, and *Theseus* muſt revenge,
Ev'n on his ſon revenge his *Phædra*'s wrongs. [heroes,

Lyc. [aſide.] What eaſie tools are theſe blunt honeſt
Who with keen hunger gorge the naked hook,
Prevent the bait the ſtateſman's art prepares,
And poſt to ruin. — Go, believing fool,
Go act thy far-fame'd justice on thy ſon,
Next on thyſelf, and both make way for *Lycon*.

Theſ. Ha ! am I ſure ſhe's wrong'd ? perhaps, tis malice.
Slave, make it clear, make good your accuſation,
Or treble fury muſt revenge my ſon.

Lyc. Am I then doubted ! and can faithful *Lycon*,
Be thought to forge ſuch execrable falſhoods ?
Gods ! when the queen unwillingly complains,
Can you ſuspect her truth ? oh godlike *Theseus* !
Is this the love you bear unhappy *Phædra* ?
Is this her hoped-for aid ? go, wretched matron,
Sigh to the winds, and rend th' unpitying heav'ns
With thy vain ſorrows ; ſince relentless *Theseus*,
Thy hope, thy refuge, *Theseus*, will not hear thee.

Theſ. Not hear my *Phædra* ! not revenge her wrongs !
Speak, make thy proofs, and then his doom's as fixt,
As when *Jove* ſpeaks, and high *Olympus* shakes,
And fate his voice obeys.

Lyc. Bear witness, heav'n !
 With what reluctance I produce this sword,
 This fatal proof against th' unhappy prince,
 Lest it should work your justice to his ruin,
 And prove he aim'd at force as well as incest.

Theſ. Gods ! 'tis illusion all ! is this the sword
 By which *Procrustes*, *Scyron*, *Pallas*, fell ?
 Is this the weapon which my darling son
 Swore to employ in nought but acts of honour ?
 Now, faithful youth, thou nobly haſt fulfill'd
 Thy gen'rous promise. Oh moſt injure'd *Phædra* !
 Why did I truſt to his deceitful form ?
 Why blame thy justice, or ſuspect thy truth ?

Lyc. Had you this morn beheld his ardent eyes,
 Seen his arm lock'd in her diſhevell'd hair,
 That weapon glitt'ring o'er her trembling bosom,
 Whilſt ſhe with ſcreams refuſed his impious love,
 Entreating death, and riſing to the wound ;
 Oh had you ſeen her, when the frightened youth
 Retired at your approach ; had you then ſeen her,
 In the chafe transports of becoming fury,
 Seize on the ſword to pierce her guiltleſs bosom,
 Had you ſeen this, you could not doubt her truth.

Theſ. Oh impious monſter ! oh forgiue me, *Phædra* !
 And may the gods infiſe my injured ſoul
 With equal vengeance that may ſuit his crimes.

Lyc. For *Phædra*'s ſake forbear to talk of vengeance ;
 That with new pains would wound her tender breast :
 Send him away from *Crete*, and, by his abſence,
 Give *Phædra* quiet, and afford him mercy.

Theſ. Mercy ! for what ! oh well has he rewarded
 Poor *Phædra*'s mercy — Oh moſt barbarous traytor !
 To wrong ſuch beauty, and iſult ſuch goodneſs.
 Mercy ! what's that ? a virtue coin'd by villains,
 Who praise the weakness which ſupports their crimes.
 Be mute and fly, leſt, when my rage is rouzed,
 Thou, for thyſelf, in vain, implore my mercy.

Lyc. Dull fool, I laugh at mercy more than thou doſt,
 More than I do the justice thou'rt ſo fond of.
 Now come, young hero, to thy father's arms,
 Receive the due reward of haughty virtue ;
 Now boast thy race, and laugh at earth-born *Lycon*. [Exit.
 Enter

Enter Hippolitus.

Thes. Yet can it be? — Is this th' incestuous villain?
 How great his presence, how erect his look,
 How ev'ry grace, how all his virtuous mother
 Shines in his face, and charms me from his eyes!
 Oh, *Neptune!* oh, great founder of our race!
 Why was he framed with such a godlike look?
 Why wears he not some most detested form,
 Baleful to fight, as horrible to thought,
 That I might act my justice without grief,
 Punish the villain, not regret the son.

Hip. May I presume to ask, what secret care
 Broods in your breast, and clouds your royal brow?
 Why dart your awful eyes these angry beams,
 And fright *Hippolitus* they used to clear?

Thes. Answer me first: when call'd to wait on *Phædra*,
 What sudden fear surprized your troubled soul?
 Why did your ebbing blood forsake your cheeks?
 Why did you hasten from your father's arms,
 To shun the queen your duty bids you please? [her,

Hip. My lord, to please the queen I'm forced to shun
 And keep this hated object from her sight.

Thes. Say, what's the cause of her invet'rate hatred?
Hip. My lord, as yet I never gave her cause. [her?
Thes. [aside] Oh were it so! — When last did you attend
Hip. When last attend her? — [aside] oh unhappy
 queen!

Your error's known, yet I disdain to wrong you,
 Or to betray a fault myself have caused.
 When last attend her? —

Thes. Answer me directly;
 Nor dare to trifle with your father's rage.

Hip. My lord, this very morn I saw the queen.

Thes. What past?

Hip. I ask'd permission to retire.

Thes. And was that all?

Hip. My lord, I humbly beg,
 With the most low submissions, ask no more.

Thes. Yet you don't answer with your low submissions.
 Answer, or never hope to see me more. [saying;

Hip. [aside] Too much he knows, I fear, without my
 And the poor queen's betray'd, and lost for ever.

Thes.

Theſ. [aſide] He changes, gods! and faulters at the question:

His fears, his words, his looks declare him guilty.

Hip. Why do you frown, my lord? why turn away, As from some loathſome monster, not your ſon?

Theſ. Thou art that monster, and no more my ſon. Not one of thoſe of the moſt horrid form, Of which my hand has eaſ'd the burthen'd earth, Was half fo ſhocking to my ſight as thou.

Hip. Where am I, gods! is that my father *Theseus*? Am I awake? am I *Hippolitus*?

Theſ. Thou art that fiend — thou art *Hippolitus*.

Thou art! — oh fall! oh fatal ſtain to honour!

How had my vain imagination form'd thee?

Brave as *Alcides*, and as *Minos* juſt.

Sometimes it led me through the maze of war;

There it survey'd thee ranging thro' the field,

Mowing down troops, and dealing out deſtruſion:

Sometimes with wholesome laws reforming ſta tes,

Crowning their happy joys with peace and plenty;

While you —

Hip. With all my father's ſoul inspire'd,

Burnt with impatient thirſt of early honour,

To hunt thro' bloody fields the chase of glory,

And bleſs your age with trophies like your own.

Gods! how that warm'd me! how my throb ing heart

Leapt to the image of my father's joy,

When you ſhou'd thain me in your folding arms,

And with kind raptures, and with sobbing joys,

Commend my valour, and confes your ſon!

How did I think my glorious oīl o'erpaid?

Then great indeed, and in my father's love,

With more than conqueſt crown'd? go on, *Hippolitus*,

Go tread the rugged paths of daring honour;

Practise the strictest, and auſtereft virtue,

And all the rigit laws of righteous *Minos*;

Theseus, thy father *Theseus* will reward thee. [thee.

Theſ. Reward thee? — yes, as *Minos* you'd reward

Was *Minos* then thy pattern? and did *Minos*,

The great, the good, the juſt, the righteous *Minos*,

The judge of hell, and oracle of earth,

Did he inspire adultery, force, and incest?

Ismena appears.

Ifm. [aside] Ha ! what's this ?

Hip. Amazement ! incest ? —

Thes. Incest with *Phædra*, with thy mother *Phædra* !

Hip. This charge so unexpected, so amazing,
So new, so strange, impossible to thought,
Stuns my astonish'd soul, and tyes my voice. [sword,

Thes. Then let this wake thee, this once glorious
With which thy father arm'd thy infant hand,
Not for this purpose. Oh abandon'd slave !

Oh early villain ! most detested coward !

With this my instrument of youthful glory !

With this ? — oh noble entrance into arms !

With this t' invade the spotless *Phædra*'s honour ?

Phædra ! my life ! my better half, my queen !

That very *Phædra*, for whose just defence
The gods would claim thy sword.

Hip. Amazement ! death !

Heav'n's ! durst I raise the far-fame'd sword of *Theseus*.
Against his queen, against my mother's bosom.

Thes. If not, declare when, where, and how you lost it ?
How *Phædra* gain'd it ? Oh all the gods ! he's silent.
Why was it bare'd ? whose bosom was it aim'd at ?
What meant thy arm advanced, thy glowing cheeks,
Thy hand, heart, eyes ? oh villain ! monstrous villain !

Hip. Is there no way, no thought, no beam of light,
No clue to guide me thro' th's gloomy maze,
To clear my honour, yet preserve my faith ?
None ! none, ye pow'rs ! and must I groan beneath
This execrable load of foul dishonour ?

Must *Theseus* suffer such unheard-of torture ?
Theseus, my father ! no, I'll break thro' all ;
All oaths, all vows, all idle imprecations,
I give 'em to the winds. Hear me, my lord !
Hear your wrong'd son. The sword — Oh fatal vow,
Ensnaring oaths, and thou, rash thoughtless fool,
To bind thyself in voluntary chains ;
Yet to thy fatal trust continue firm !
Beneath disgrace, tho' infamous yet honest.
Yet hear me, father ; may the righteous gods
Show'r all their curses on this wretched head.
Oh may they doom me ! —

Thes.

Theſ. Yes, the gods will doom thee.
The ſword, the ſword ! now ſwear, and call to witness,
Heav'n, hell, and earth ; I mark it not from one,
That breathes beneath ſuch complicated guilt.

Hip. Was that like guilt, when, with expanded arms,
I ſprang to meet you at your wiſh'd return ?
Does this appear like guilt when thus ſerene,
With eyes erect, and viſage unappall'd,
Fixt on that awful face, I ſtand the charge ;
Amazed, not fearing : ſay, if I am guilty,
Where are the conſcious looks, the face now pale,
Now flushing red, the down-caſt haggard eyes,
Or fix'd on earth, or ſlowly rais'd to catch
A fearful view, then ſunk again with horror ?

Theſ. This is for raw, untaught, unfiniſh'd villains.
Thou in thy bloom haſt reach'd th' abhorrd perfection :
Thy even looks cou'd wear a peaceful calm,
The beauteous ſtamp (oh heavens !) of faultleſs virtue,
While thy foul heart contrive'd this horrid deed.
Oh harden'd fiend, can't ſuch tranſcending crimes
Disturb thy ſoul, or ruffle thy ſmooth brow ?
What ! no remorse ! no qualms ! no pricking pang !
No feeble struggle of rebelling honour !
O 'twas thy joy ! thy ſecret hoard of bliſs,
To dream, to ponder, act it o'er in thought ;
To doat, to dwell on, as rejoicing misers
Brood o'er their precious ſtores of ſecret gold.

Hip. Muſt I not ſpeak ? then ſay, unerring heav'n,
Why was I born with ſuch a thirſt of glory ?
Why did this morning dawn to my diſhonour ?
Why did not pitying fate, with ready death,
Prevent the guilty day ?

Theſ. Guilty indeed.
Even at the time you heard your father's death,
And ſuch a father (oh immortal gods !)
As held thee dearer than his life and glory ;
When thou ſhould'ſt rend the ſkies with clam'rous grief,
Beat thy ſad breast, and tear thy ſtarting hair ;
Then to my bed to force your impious way ;
With horrid luſt t' insult my yet warm urn ;
Make me the ſcorn of hell, and ſport for fiends !
These are the fun'ral honours paid to *Theseus*,

Theſ.

These are the sorrows, these the hallow'd rites
To which you'd call your father's hove'ring spirit.

Enter Ismena.

Ism. [turning to Theseus] Hear me, my lord, ere yet
you fix his doom :
Hear one that comes to shield his injur'd honour,
And guard his life with hazard of her own.

These. Tho' thou'rt the daughter of my hated foe,
Tho' ev'n thy beauty's loathsome to my eyes,
Yet justice bids me hear thee.

Ism. [kneels] Thus I thank you.
Then know, mistaken prince, his honest soul
Cou'd ne'er be sway'd by impious love to *Phædra*,
Since I before engaged his early vows,
With all my wiles subdue'd his struggling heart ;
For long his duty struggled with his love.

These. Speak, is this true ? on thy obedience, speak.
Hip. So charged, I own the dang'rous truth ; I own,
Against her will, I loved the fair *Ismena*.

These. Canst thou be only clear'd by disobedience,
And justify'd by crimes ? — what ! love my foe !
Love one descended from a race of tyrants,
Whose blood yet reeks on my avenging sword !
I'm curst each moment I delay thy fate :
Haste to the shades, and tell the happy *Pallas*
Ismena's flames, and let him taste such joys
As thou give'st me ; go tell applauding *Minos*
The pious love you bore his daughter *Phædra* ;
Tell it the chatt'ring ghosts, and hissing furies,
Tell it the grinn'g fiends, 'till hell sound nothing
To thy pleat'd ears out *Phædra* and *Ismena*.

Enter Cratander.

Seize him, *Cratander*, take this guilty sword,
Let his own hand avenge the crimes it acted,
And b d him die, at least, like *Theseus'* son.
Take him away, and execute my orders.

Hip. Heav'n how that strikes me ! how it wounds my
soul !

To think of your unutterable sorrows,
When you shall find *Hippolitus* was guiltless !
Yet when you know the innocence you doom'd,
When you shall mourn your son's unhappy fate,

Oh !

Oh! I beseech you by the love you bore me,
 With my last words, (my words will then prevail)
 Oh for my sake forbear to touch your life,
 Nor wound again *Hippolitus* in *Theseus*.
 Let all my virtues, all my joys survive
 Fresh in your breast, but be my woes forgot ;
 The woes which fate, and not my father wrought.
 Oh ! let me dwell for ever in your thoughts,
 Let me be honour'd still, but not deplored.

Thes. Then thy chief care is for thy father's life.
 O blooming hypocrite ! oh young dissembler !
 Well hast thou shewn the care thou take'st of *Theseus*.
 Oh all ye gods ! how this inflames my fury !
 I scarce can hold my rage ; my eager hands
 Tremble to reach thee. No, dishonour'd *Theseus* !
 Blot not thy fame with such a monster's blood.
 Snatch him away.

Hip. Lead on. Farewel, *Ismena*.

Ism. Oh take me with him ; let me share his fate.
 Oh awful *Theseus* ! yet revoke his doom :
 See, see the very ministers of death,
 Tho' bred to blood, yet shrink, and wish to save him.
Thes. Slaves, villains, tear her from him, cut her arms
Ism. Oh tear me, cut me, 'till my sever'd limbs [off.
 Grow to my lord, and share the pains he suffers.

Thes. Villains, away.

Ism. O *Theseus*, hear me, hear me.
Thes. Away, nor taint me with thy loathsome touch.
 Off, woman.

Ism. Stay, oh stay ! I'll tell you all. [Exit *Theseus*.
 Already gone — Tell it ye conscious walls ;
 Bear it ye winds upon your pitying wings ;
 Resound it fame, with all your hundred tongues.
 Oh hapless youth ! all heav'n conspires agaist you.
 The conscious walls conceal the fatal secret :
 Th' untainted winds refuse th' infecting load :
 And fame itself is mute. — Nay, even *Ismena*,
 Thy own *Ismena*'s sworn to thy destruction.
 But still, whate'er the cruel gods design,
 In the same fate our equal stars combine,
 And he who dooms thy death, pronounces mine.

[*Exeunt.*
A C T

A C T V.

Enter Phædra, and Lycon.

Lyc. **A**ccuse yourself ? oh ! on my knees I beg you,
By all the gods, recal the fatal message.

Heav'ns ! will you stand the dreaded rage of *Theseus* ?
And brand your fame, and work your own destruction ?

Phæd. By thee I'm branded, and by thee destroy'd ;
Thou bosom serpent, thou alluring fiend !
Yet shan't you boast the miseries you cause,
Nor 'scape the ruin you have brought on all.

Lyc. Was it not your command ? has faithful *Lycon*
E'er spoke, e'er thought, design'd, contrived, or acted ?
His he done aught without the queen's consent ?

Phæd. Plead'it thou consent to what thou first in-
Was that consent ? O senseless politician ! [spired'it ?
When adverse passions struggled in my breast,
When anger, fear, love, sorrow, guilt, despair,
Drove out my reason, and usurp'd my soul.

Yet this consent you plead, O faithful *Lycon* !

Oh ! only zealous for the fame of *Phædra* !

With this you blot my name, and clear your own ;
And what's my frenzy, will be call'd my crime :
What then is thine ? thou cool, delib'rare villain !
Thou wise, fore-thinking, weighing politician !

Lyc. Oh 'twas so black, my frighten'd tongue recoil'd
At its own sound, and horror shook my soul.
Yet still, tho' pierce'd with such amazing anguish,
Such was my zeal, so much I loved my queen,
I broke thro' all, to save the life of *Phædra*.

Phæd. What's life ? oh all ye gods ! can life atone
For all the monstrous crimes by which 'tis bought ?
Or can I live, when thou, oh soul of honour !
Oh early hero ! by my crimes art ruin'd.
Perhaps ev'n now the great unhappy youth
Falls by the sordid hands of butchering villains ;
Now now, he bleeds ! he dies — oh perjured traitor !
See his rich blood in purple torrents flow,
And nature sallies in unbidden groans ;

Now mortal pangs distort his lovely form,
 His rosy beauties fade, his starry eyes
 Now darkling swim, and fix their closing beams ;
 Now in short gasps his lab'ring spirit heaves,
 And weakly flutters on his fault'ring tongue,
 And struggles into sound. Hear, monster hear,
 With his last breath he curses perjur'd *Phædra* :
 He summons *Phædra* to the bar of *Minos* :
 Thou too shalt there appear ; to torture thee
 Whole hell shall be employ'd, and suff'ring *Phædra*
 Shall find some ease to see thee still more wretched.

Lyc. Oh all ye pow'rs ! oh *Phædra* ! hear me, hear me,
 By all my zeal, by all my anxious cares,
 By those unhappy crimes I wrought to serve you,
 By these old wither'd limbs, and hoary hairs,
 By all my tears ! — Oh heav'ns ! she minds me not,
 She hears not my complaints. Oh wretched *Lycon* !
 To what art thou reserved ?

Phæd. Reserved to all
 The sharpest, slowest pains that earth can furnish,
 To all I wish — on *Phædra* — guards secure him.

[*Lycon carry'd off.*
 Ha ! *Theseus*, gods ! my freezing blood congeals,
 And all my thoughts, designs, and words are lost.

Enter Theseus.
Thes. Dost thou at last repent ? oh lovely *Phædra* !
 At last with equal ardour meet my vows :
 O dear-bought blessing ! yet I'll not complain,
 Since now my sharpest grief is all o'erpaid,
 And only heightens joy. — Then haste, my charmer,
 Let's feast our famish'd souls with am'rous riot,
 With fiercest bliss atone for our delay,
 And in a moment love the age we've lost.

Phæd. Stand off, approach me, touch me not ; fly
 hence,
 Far as the distant skies or deepest center.

Thes. Amazement ! death ! ye gods who guide the
 world,
 What can this mean ? so fierce a detestation,
 So strong abhorrence ! — speak, exquisite tormentor !
 Was it for this your summons fill'd my soul
 With eager raptures, and tumultuous transports ?

Ev'n painful joys, and agonies of bliss.
 Did I for this ooey my *Phætra*'s call,
 And fly with trembling haste to meet her arms?
 And am I thus received? O cruel *Phædra*!
 Was it for this you rouz'd my drouzie foul
 From the dull lethargy of hopeless love?
 And dost thou only shew those beauteous eyes
 To weak despair, and blast me with their beams?

Phæd. Oh! were that all to which the gods have
 doom'd me;
 But angry heav'n has laid in store for *Theseus*
 Such perfect mischief, such transcendent woe,
 That the black image shocks my frightened soul,
 And the words die on my reluctant tongue.

These. Fear not to speak it; that harmonious voice
 Will make the saddest tale of sorrow pleasing,
 And charm the grief it brings.—Thus let me hear it,
 Thus in thy sight! thus gazing on those eyes,
 I can support the utmost spite of fate,
 And stand the rage of heav'n—approach, my fair—

Phæd. Off, or I fly for ever from thy sight:
 Shall I embrace the father of *Hippolitus*?

These. Forget the villain, drive him from your soul.
Phæd. Can I forget? or drive him from my soul?
 Oh! he will still be present to my eyes;
 His words will ever echo in my ears;
 Still will he be the torture of my days,
 Bane of my life, and ruin of my glory.

These. And mine and all.—Oh most abandon'd villain!
 Oh lasting scandal to our godlike race!
 That cou'd contrive a crime so foul as incest.

Phæd. Incest! oh name it not! —
 The very mention shakes my inmost soul:
 The gods are startled in their peaceful mansions,
 And nature sickle's at the shocking sound.
 Thou brutal wretch! thou execrable monster!
 To break thro' all the laws that early flow
 From untaught reason, and distinguish man;
 Mix like the senseless herd with bestial lust,
 Mother and son preposterously wicked;
 To banish from thy soul the reverence due
 To honour, nature, and the genial bed,

And injure one so great, so good as *Theseus*.

Theſ. To injure one so great, so good as *Phædra* ;
Oh slave ! to wrong such purity as thine,
Such dazzling brightness ; such exalted virtue.

Phæd. Virtue ! all seeing gods, ye know my virtue.
Must I support all this ? O righteous heav'n !
Can't I yet speak ? Reproach I could have borne,
Pointed his satyrs stings, and edge'd his rage,
But to be prais'd — now, *Minos*, I defy thee,
Ev'n all thy dreadful magazines of pains,
Stones, furies, wheels, are flight to what I suffer,
And hell itself's relief.

Theſ. What's hell to thee ?
What crimes cou'dſt thou commit ? or what reproaches
Cou'd innocence so pure as *Phædra*'s fear.
O, thou'rt the chasteſt matron of thy sex,
The faireſt pattern of excelling virtue ;
Our lateſt annals ſhall record thy glory,
The maid's example, and the matron's theme ;
Each ſkilful artist ſhall express thy form,
In animated gold. — The threatneſt ſword
Shall hang for ever o'er thy ſnowey bosom ;
Such heav'ly beauty on thy face ſhall bloom,
As ſhall almost excuse the villain's crime ;
But yet that firmleſs, that unſhaken virtue,
As ſtill ſhall make the monster more deteſted.
Where'er you paſſ, the crowded way ſhall sound
With joyful cries, and endless acclamations :
And when aspiring bards, in daring ſtrains,
Shall raise ſome heav'ly matron to the pow'rs,
They'll ſay, ſhe's great, ſhe's true ſhe's chaste as *Phædra*.

Phæd. This might have been. — But now, oh cruel
Now, as I paſſ, the crowded way ſhall sound [stars !
With hisſing ſcorn, and murmur'ring deteſtaſion :
That lateſt annals ſhall record my shame ;
And when th' avenging muſe, with pointed rage,
Wou'd ſink ſome impious woman down to hell,
She'll ſay, ſhe's falſe, ſhe's baſe, ſhe's foul as *Phædra*.

Theſ. Hadſt thou been foul, had horrid violation
Cafed any stains on purity like thine,
They're wash'd already in the villain's blood :
The very ſword, his iſtument of horror,

Ere this time drench'd in his incestuous heart,
Has done thee justice, and avenged the crimes
He used it to perform.

Enter Messenger

Mess. Alas! my lord,
Ere this the prince is dead — I saw *Cratander*
Give him a sword — I saw him boldly take it,
Rear it on high, and point it to his breast,
With steady hands, and with disdainful looks,
As one that fear'd not death, but scorn'd to die,
And not in battle — a loud clamour follow'd ;
And the surrounding soldiers hid from sight ;
But all pronounced him dead.

Phaed. Is he then dead ?

Thesef. Yes, yes, he's dead, and dead by my command
And in this dreadful act of mournful justice,
I'm more renown'd than in my dear-bought laurels.

Phaed. Then thou'rt renown'd indeed — oh happy
Oh, only worthy of the love of *Phaedra* ! [*Theseus* !
Haste then, let's join our well-met hands together ;
Unite for ever, and defie the gods
To shew a pair so eminently wretched. [praise me,

Thesef. Wretched ! for what ? for what the world must
For what the nations shall adore my justice,
A villain's death ?

Phaed. *Hippolitus* a villain !
Oh, he was all his godlike fire cou'd wish,
The pride of *Theseus*, and the hopes of *Crete*.
Nor did the bravest of his godlike race
Tread with such early hopes the paths of honour.

Thesef. What can this mean? declare, ambiguous *Phaedra* ;
Say, whence these shifting gusts of clashing rage ?
Why are thy doubted speeches dark and troubled,
As *Cretan* seas when vext by warring winds ?
Why is a villain, with alternate passion,
Accused and prais'd, detested and deplored ?

Phaed. Canst thou not guess ? —
Canst thou not read it in my furious passions ?
In all the wild disorders of my soul ?
Cou'dst thou not see it in the noble warmth
That urged the daring youth to acts of honour ?
Cou'dst thou not find it in the gen'rou, truth,

Which sparkled in his eyes, and open'd in his face ?
 Cou'dst not perceive it in the chaste reserve !
 In every word and look, each godlike act,
 Cou'dst thou not see *Hippolitus* was guiltless ?

Thes. Guiltless ! oh all ye gods ! what can this mean ?

Phæd. Mean ! that the guilt is mine, that virtuous *Phæd.*
 The maid's example, and the matron's theme, [dra,
 With bestial passion woo'd your loathing son,
 And when deny'd, with impious accusation
 Sully'd the lustre of his shining honour ;
 Of my own crimes accused the faultless youth,
 And with ensnaring wiles destroy'd that virtue
 I try'd in vain to shake.

Thes. Is he then guiltless ?
 Guiltless ! then what art thou ? and, oh just heav'n !
 What a detested parricide is *Theseus* ?

Phæd. What am I ? what indeed, but one more black
 Than earth, or hell e'er bore ! O horrid mixture
 Of crimes, and woes, of parricide, and incest,
 Perjury, murder ; to arm the erring father
 Against the guiltless son. O impious *Lycon* !
 In what a hell of woes thy arts have plunged me. [lain !

Thes. *Lycon* ! here, guards ! — oh most abandon'd vil-
 Secure him, seize him, drag him piece-meal hither.

Enter Guards.

Guards. Who has, my lord, incur'd your high dis-
 pleasure ?

Thes. Who can it be, ye gods, but perjured *Lycon* ?
 Who can inspire such storms of rage, but *Lycon* ?
 Where has my sword left one so black, but *Lycon* ?
 Where ! wretched *Theseus* ! in thy bed and heart,
 The very darling of my soul and eyes !
 Oh beauteous fiend ! but trust not to thy form.
 You too, my son, was fair ; your manly beauties
 Charm'd every heart, (O heav'ns !) to your destruction,
 You too were good, your virtuous soul abhor'd
 The crimes for which you dy'd. Oh impious *Phædرا* !
 Incestuous fury ! execrable murth'res !
 Is there revenge on earth, or pain in hell,
 Can art invent, or boiling rage suggest,
 Ev'n endless torture which thou shalt not suffer ?

Phæd. And is there aught on earth I wou'd not suffer ?
 Oh,

Oh, were there vengeance equal to my crimes,
 Thou need'st not claim it, most unhappy youth,
 From any hands but mine: t' avenge thy fate
 I'd court the fiercest pains and sue for tortures;
 And *Phaedra*'s suff' rings shou'd attone for thine:
 Ev'n now I fall a victim to thy wrongs;
 Ev'n now a fatal draught works out my soul;
 Ev'n now it curdles in my shrinking veins
 The lazy blood, and freezes at my heart.

Lycon brought in.

Thef. Hast thou escaped my wrath? yet, impious *Lycon*,
 On thee I'll empty all my hoard of vengeance,
 And glut my boundless rage.

Lyc. O! mercy, mercy!

Thef. Such thou shalt find as thy deeds best deserve,
 Such as thy guilty soul can hope from *Theseus*;
 Such as thou shew'dst to poor *Hippolitus*.

Lyc. O chain me! whip me! let me be the scorn
 Of sordid rabbles, and insulting crowds!
 Give me but life, and make that life most wretched.

Phaed. Art thou so base, so spiritless a slave?
 Not so the lovely youth thy arts have ruin'd,
 Not so he bore the fate to which you doom'd him.

Thef. Oh abject villain! yet it gives me joy
 To see the fears that shake thy guilty soul,
 Enhance thy crimes, and antedate thy woes.
 Oh, how thou'l howl thy fearful soul away,
 While laughing crowds shall echo to thy cries, [him],
 And make thy pains their sport. Haste, hence, away with
 Drag him to all the torments earth can furnish;
 Let him be wreck'd and gash'd, impale'd alive;
 Then let the mangled monster, fixt on high, [gance].
 Grin o'er the shouting crowds, and glut their ven-
 And is this all? and art thou now appeas'd?
 Will this attone for poor *Hippolitus*?

Oh ungorged appetite! oh rav'nous thirst
 Of a son's blood! what not a day, a moment! [staid

Phaed. A day! a moment! oh! thou should'st have
 Years, ages, all the round of circling time,
 Ere touch'd the life of that consummate youth.

Thef. And yet with joy I flew to his destruction,
 Boasted his fate, and triumph'd in his ruin,

Not

Not this I promis'd to his dying mother,
 When, in her mortal pangs, she, sighing, gave me
 The last cold kisses from her trembling lips,
 And reach'd her feeble wand'ring hands to mine ;
 When her last breath, now quiv'ring at her mouth,
 Implored my goodness to her lovely son ;
 To her *Hippolitus*. He, alas ! descends
 An early victim to the lazy shades,
 (Oh heav'n and earth !) by *Theseus* doom'd, descends.

Phæd He's doom'd by *Theseus*, but accused by *Phædra*,
 By *Phædra*'s madness, and by *Lycon*'s hatred.
 Yet with my life I expiate my frenzy,
 And die for thee, my head-long rage destroy'd :
 Thee I pursue, (oh great ill-fated youth !)
 Pursue thee still, but now with chaste desires ;
 Thee thro' the dismal waste of gloomy death ;
 Thee thro' the glimm'ring dawn, and purer day,
 Thro' all th' *Elysian* plains : O righteous *Minos* !
Elysian plains ! there he and his *Ismena*
 Shall sport for ever, shall for ever drink
 Immortal love ; while I far off shall howl
 In lonely plains ; while all the blackest ghosts
 Shrink from the baleful sight of one more monstrous,
 And more accurst than they.

Thesef. I too must go ;
 I too must once more see the burning shoar
 Of livid *Acheron* and black *Cocytus*,
 Whence no *Alcides* will release me now. [together]

Phæd. Then why this stay ? come on, let's plunge
 See hell sets wide its adamantine gates,
 See thro' the sable gates the black *Cocytus*
 In smoaky circles rows its fiery waves :
 Hear, hear the stunning harmonies of woe,
 The din of rattling chains, of clashing whips,
 Of groans, of loud complain's, of piercing shrieks,
 That wide thro' all its gloomy world resound.
 Now huge *Megara* stalks ! what streaming fires
 Blaze from her glaring eyes ! what serpents curl
 In horrid wreaths, and hiss around her head !
 Now, now she drags me to the bar of *Minos*.
 See how the awful judges of the dead
 Look steadfast hate, and horrible dismay !

See *Minos* turns away his loathing eyes,
 Rage choaks his struggling words: the fatal urn
 Drops from his trembling hand: O all ye gods!
 What, *Lycon* here! oh execrable villain!
 Then am I still on earth? by hell I am,
 A fury now, a scourge preserved for *Lycon*!
 See the just beings offer to my vengeance
 That impious slave. Now, *Lycon*, for revenge:
 Thanks heav'n, 'tis here — I'll steal it to his heart.

[*Mistaking Theseus for Lycon, offers to stab him.*

Guards. Heav'ns! 'tis your lord.
Phœd. My lord! O equal heav'n!
 Must each portentous moment rise in crimes,
 And sallying life go off in parricide?
 Then trust not thy flow drugs. Thus sure of death

[*Stabs herself.*

Compleat thy horrors — and, if this suffice not,
 Thou *Minos*, do the rest.

Thes. At length she's quiet,
 And earth now bears not such a wretch as *Theseus*;
 Yet I'll obey *Hippolitus*, and live:
 Then to the wars; and as the *Corybantines*,
 With clashing shields, and braying trumpets, drown'd
 The cries of infant *Jove* — I'll stifle conscience,
 And nature's murmurs in the din of arms.
 But what are arms to me? is he not dead
 For whom I fought? for whom my hoary age
 Glow'd with the boiling heat of youth in battle?
 How then to drag a wretched life beneath
 An endless round of still returning woes,
 And all the gnawing pangs of vain remorse?
 What torment's this? — therefore, O greatly thought!
 Therefore do justice on thyself — and live;
 Live above all most infinitely wretched:
Ismena too — nay, then avenging heav'n

Ismena enters.

Has vented all its rage — O wretched maid!
 Why dost thou come to swell my raging grief?
 Why add to sorrows, and embitter woes?
 Why do thy mournful eyes upbraid my guilt?
 Why thus recall to my afflicted soul
 The sad remembrance of my godlike son,

Of

Of that dear youth my cruelty has ruin'd ?

Ism. Ruin'd ! — O all ye powers ! O awful *Theseus* !
Say, where's my lord ! say, where has fate disposed him ?
Oh speak, the fear distracts me.

Thef. Gods ! can I speak ?
Can I declare his fate to his *Ismena* ?
Oh lovely maid ! coud'st thou admit of comfort,
Thou shou'dst for ever be my only care,
Work of my life, and labour of my soul.
For thee alone, my sorrow, lull'd, shall cease ;
Cease for a while to mourn my murther'd son :
For thee alone, my sword once more shall rage,
Restore the crown, of which it robb'd your race :
Then let your grief give way to thoughts of empire ;
At thy own *Athens* reign. The happy crowd
Beneath thy easie yoke with pleasure bow,
And think in thee their own *Minerva* reigns.

Ism. Must I then reign ? nay, must I live without him ?
Not so, oh godlike youth ! you loved *Ismena* ;
You, for her sake, refused the *Cretan* empire,
And yet a nobler gift, the royal *Pbædra*.
Shall I then take a crown, a guilty crown,
From the relentless hand that doom'd thy death ?
Oh ! 'tis in death alone I can have ease,
And thus I find it. [Offers to stab herself.]

Enter Hippolitus.

Hip. O forbear *Ismena* !
Forbear, chaste maid, to wound thy tender bosom ;
Oh heaven and earth ! should she resolve to die,
And snatch all beauty from the widow'd earth ?
Was it for me, ye gods ! she'd fall a victim ?
Was it for me she'd die ? O heav'nly virgin !
See, see thy own *Hippolitus*, who lives,
And hopes to live for thee.

Ism. *Hippolitus* !
Am I alive or dead ? is this *Elysium* ?
'Tis he, 'tis all *Hippolitus* — ar't well ?
Ar't thou not wounded ?
Thef. Oh unhope'd-for joy !
Stand off, and let me fly into his arms.
Speak, say, what god, what miracle preserved thee ;
Did'st thou not strike thy father's cruel present,

My

My sword, into thy breast ?

Hip. I aim'd it there,
But turn'd it from myself, and flew *Cratander*.
The guards, not trusted with his fatal orders,
Granted my wish, and brought me to the king :
I fear'd not death, but could not bear the thought
Of *Theseus'* sorrow, and *Ismena's* loss ;
Therefore I hasten'd to your royal presence,
Here to receive my doom.

Thes. Be this thy doom,
To live for ever in *Ismena's* arms.
Go, heav'nly pair, and with your dazzling virtues,
Your courage, truth, your innocence and love,
Amaze and charm mankind ; and rule that empire,
For which, in vain, your rival fathers fought.

Ism. Oh killing joy !

Hip. Oh extasie of bliss !

Am I posseſſ'd at last of my *Ismena* ?
Of that celestial maid, oh pitying gods !
How shall I thank your bounties for my suff'ring,
For all my pains, and all the pangs I've borne ?
Since 'twas to them I owe divine *Ismena*,
To them I owe the dear consent of *Theseus*.
Yet there's a pain lies heavy on my heart,
For the difaſt'rous fate of hapless *Phædra*. [you

Thes. Deep was her anguish : for the wrongs she did
She chose to die, and, in her death, deplore'd
Your fate, and not her own.

Hip. I've heard it all.

O ! had not passion fully'd her renown,
None e'er on earth had shone with equal lustre ;
So glorious live'd, or so lamented dy'd.
Her faults were only faults of raging love,
Her virtues all her own.

Ism. Unhappy *Phædra* !

Was there no other way, ye pitying pow'rs !
No other way to crown *Ismena's* love ?
Then must I ever mourn her cruel fate,
And in the midst of my triumphant joy,
Ev'n in my hero's arms, confess some sorrow.

Thes. O tender maid ! forbear, with ill-time'd grief,
To damp our blessings, and incense the gods ?

But

But let's away, and pay kind heav'n our thanks
 For all the wonders in our favour wrought ;
 That heav'n, whose mercy rescued erring Theseus
 From execrable crimes, and endless woes.

Then learn from me, ye kings that rule the world
 With equal poize, let steady justice sway,
 And flagrant crimes with certain vengeance pay,
 But, 'till the proofs are clear, the stroak delay.

Hip. The righteous gods that innocence require,
 Protect the goodness which themselves inspire ;
 Unguarded virtue human arts defies,
 Th' accused is happy, while th' accuser dies.

[*Exeunt omnes.*

F I N I S.



An ACCOUNT of the LIFE of
 Mr. EDMUND SMITH.

HE was the Son of a Merchant, and was first educated at *Westminster-School*, under Dr. Busby. He removed thence to *Christ-Church College, Oxford*, where he acquired the Character of a very great Scholar, but was a Person of a very careless Disposition, and particularly so in his Drefs, which got him the Nick-name of *Captain Ragg*. He died in the 42d Year of his Age, in the Year 1710, at the Seat of *George Duckett, Esq;* call'd *Hartham*, in *Wiltshire*, and was buried in the Parish Church there. He wrote this Play (and this only) in the Year 1707.

